

LAYMEN'S

WORK

In This Issue :

- BOSSEY AT A TURNING POINT
- LAY LEADERS ROUND THE TABLE
- TOWARDS A THEOLOGY OF THE LAITY



WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

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CONTENTS

	Page
Editorial.	1
The Relation between the Spiritual and the Temporal or the Sacred and the Secular	3
Accepting the World	13
Growing into Adulthood	17
The Lay Ministry in the World	21
Roman Catholic Theology and the Laity	24
Round Table Talks.	30
Some Reflections on the Ecumenical Institute	44
Some Items concerning Laymen's Movements	47
Calendar	51

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EDITORIAL

Yesterday evening I listened to a lecture given by a professor of theology who spoke on "Active Witness of the Laity." He said that it was commonly accepted that the Church must do more than hitherto to activise its laymen and women, but that the moment one embarked on such a task one ran into certain difficulties. First of all lay people were extremely busy and often would not have the time to attend church classes on either doctrinal or ethical subjects. Secondly, he said, the Protestant Church had to face a particular dilemma in the training of the laity. To educate a Protestant was to educate a man to think freely and act independently. Could the Church afford to do that in view of the fact that for Protestants there were not ready made answers to everything to be drawn from the Bible? Would not laymen once they had come to spiritual adulthood run away from these catechism classes? I hope that they will. For, if the Church attempts to "activise" its laymen before the church representatives have thought of becoming interested and active in the fields where laymen do their daily work it is bound to get shipwrecked.

I had another such unprofessional hope. A year ago, in America, a man was introduced to me of whom his minister and his fellow church members were seemingly very proud. He was the lay champion of his church. With the modesty of a Christian layman he told me that he was spending six evenings out of seven in some church organisation. Having discovered on enquiry that he was married and had three children, and that he was a businessman and a Republican, I said I hoped that from now on he would find the time to spend five evenings out of the six with his family, with his hobbies, with his business colleagues and his political party, all of which need a good Christian much more badly than any church organisation.

The aim of Laymen's Work, as we understand it, is not that those who go to church anyway go there more often, although in fact that may be a good thing, but that the Church and those who represent it — and this is virtually every believer — go where the people today live and work, and that they are concerned about those people and their problems in married, occupational, social and political life. The laity are the Church as it is present in modern life. It is certain that they need to be trained in order to live up to their task of being the Church in the world. But this training must not be something imposed on them, deflecting them from their actual concerns, but something which they feel they need and which nobody can give them except they themselves in mutual exchange of experience and thought. A minister will take part in such discussions as somebody whose first task is to learn himself, and who then shares with the others the burdens of everyday life in the name of Christ.

It is the purpose of this bulletin on the basis of experiences gathered from many parts of the world to chart the way so that the churches may take more seriously the daily work of laymen and women and by implication the matters of this earth, and that laymen may feel that there is nothing merely technical and routine but that everything has a spiritual dimension which must be seen and explored in order that a true decision between faith and disbelief can be made day by day. In recent numbers we have summarised experiences in certain professional fields. This time, we want to give a more general view as we did in two earlier issues of this bulletin. We shall present it in two main parts. The first deals with the question of a theology of the laity, which is an evaluation of the positions which lay people occupy in society and of the things with which laymen and women are ordinarily concerned in the light of Christian teaching. In the second part we print certain brief reports of Laymen's Work as done in various countries. The contributions to the two parts are mainly taken from lectures and reports given at a Conference of Leaders of Laymen's Institutes and Groups who met at Bossey at the end of March this year. These papers are supplemented by some other documentation. For the rest, the reader will find the usual items in this bulletin.

This is the last issue before the delegates of the Churches meet at Evanston. After Evanston there will no longer be a Secretariat for Laymen's Work ; rather, we hope, an extended permanent Department on the Work of the Laity. I was asked to continue after Evanston as the head of the new Department. But at the same time there came a call from my home country, and I decided that I had to follow it. Beginning in November of this year I shall be the Executive General Secretary of the Deutsche Evangelische Kirchentag (Germany), thus leaving the World Council — but not the Ecumenical Movement, or Laymen's Work. I wish to thank all those who during the years have contributed to this bulletin and to the building up of this whole clearing house on Laymen's Work and I do hope that this ecumenical co-operation will be continued and strengthened. The new head of the Department has not yet been appointed. But I am sure that he will meet with the same ready co-operation from every quarter as I did when I started this work five years ago. A special word of thanks is due to my secretary, Miss Mireio Leuthold. Without her, neither this issue of the bulletin nor the other six issues would have appeared.

H.H.W.

THE RELATION BETWEEN THE SPIRITUAL AND THE TEMPORAL, OR THE SACRED AND THE SECULAR

An Introduction to the Problem

C. W. Mönnich

I. God and Man

Athanasius, in his *Life of St. Anthony*, tells us a moving story about the encounter of an officer, called Martinianus, and the great hermit. The holy man has secluded himself from the world for prayer and meditation; nobody can get access to him. But there arrives an officer, in great distress: his daughter is dangerously ill, and there is no doctor who can cure her. In his desperation he seeks the help of the great saint, who is renowned for the miracles he can work. Alas, the door of the cell stays shut, and Martinianus' insistence seems to be of no avail. But at length the hermit, annoyed by the noise outside, cries to him from within: "I am a man just like you. If you have faith in the Christ whom I serve, well, pray to God according to your faith!" Immediately the soldier is converted, he prays, and lo, his daughter is restored to health.

It is a moving story, and a remarkable one. The essence of it is not the miraculous power of Athanasius' ascetic hero. In this anecdote he does not perform any wondrous thing. The miracle is worked by the father; he heals the girl by his prayer. The man is a soldier, a layman, and, in the eyes of the ascetics for whom Athanasius told this story, a profane man because of his profession. It was deeply felt at this time that the work of the army had to be done dangerously near the borders of sin. And now it is a soldier, Athanasius tells us, who is called the equal of the great saint and encouraged to perform a miracle!

The holiness of Anthony, that man of God, as his biographer calls him, is not, indeed, a mysterious divine power, by which he becomes of another quality than ordinary man, but it is his knowledge of and his obedience to God's Word. He tells the officer what to do in the name of Christ. He is an intermediary between God and man; but only in the sense of a messenger. "I am a man just like you." God does not make any other distinction than that between obedience and disobedience of His creatures.

The contrast between the sacred and the profane is not a fundamental notion of the Christian faith. It is true that such a notion does exist in the Bible. There are deeds and objects which defile the purity of the holy service, and indeed of God's people. To give an example: when the Lord gives Jericho into the hands of Israel, the people of God may not touch anything of the doomed town or keep it for themselves: it has to be destroyed or to be put in the treasury of the sanctuary. Achan disobeys the prohibition, and he becomes a profane man. He therefore has to be destroyed, with his house. But even in this story there is an

element of something else than profanation. Achan is disobedient, and because of that he is profane. There is in this story, as well as elsewhere in the Bible, a notion even more fundamental than the distinction between the sacred and the profane: it is the distinction between God, the Lord, and man's disobedience. The covenant of God primarily asks that man should obey the Word of God; and therefore it is primarily in terms of obedience and disobedience that the Bible explains the fundamental notions of man's relation to God.

The old Christians were faithful in keeping to that notion. It was, indeed, one of the typical marks of Christianity in the eyes of the Gentiles. They complained of the sacrilegious contempt which the Christians displayed before the old gods, and they called that sacrilege atheism. The Christians denied the existence of a divine order, if it had nothing to do with the Word of God; and the suspicions of the Gentiles toward Christianity were based on the anxiety lest the Christian behaviour in matters of religion should enrage the gods. It was a wide-spread and bitter reproach in the times when the barbarians invaded the Empire and the Roman power crumbled to pieces under their attacks, that the cause of the endless series of calamities was the fault of the Christians who refused to believe in a sacred celestial and imperial order; the perishing of Rome could be nothing else but the vengeance of the gods. The irony of St. Paul in the face of the religious customs of the Athenians has remained exemplary for later Christian thinkers: the Apologists, Tertullian, Firmicus Maternus and many others. Their attitude reminds us of the bitter sarcasm with which the people of the Reformation in the 16th century considered the divine world of Roman Catholicism. It has led to iconoclasm and to utterings verging on sacrilege, or rather going over the borderline of the permissible. But in itself it was a healthy and a good Christian sentiment to refuse any acknowledgment of a divine order without a biblical foundation.

The Gospel is a message to the people in darkness, and that darkness is caused by being bound in sin. It is by sinning that the people of God has become profane, not by being earthly and material beings. Creation is not in itself something profane. Clearly the Council of Chalcedon (451) implied the uselessness of the distinction between the sacred and the profane as such when it defined Christ as one person in two natures, one in essence with the Father as to His divine nature, and one in essence with us as to His human nature.

Therefore our religion is not a kind of protection against mysterious supernatural powers that might be dangerous or evil if we do not take care, or a means of giving us the benefit of such powers. We do not fear God because of His being a kind of high-tension electricity we must not come too near to. When we speak of the fear of God it is the fear of His high Lordship, who reigns over His world and commands us to obey Him. The profane can only be the man who is disobedient to God's Word.

II. Church and World

The second important notion I have to introduce is implied in the first one. By the grace of God we are not lifted out of the profane sphere into a sacred one, but we receive pardon for our transgressions and the promise that the Lord will keep us in His covenant. In other words, by the grace of God we are incor-

porated in the body of Christ. Christ does not release us from the created world, but in Him we receive God's pardon and His sanctification. In Christ the world is being restored to its pristine glory, and even more than that, it is put on the way to greater glory. The world has a new future.

What does that imply? What is the meaning of God's covenant and what is the purpose of our being called to His communion? The Bible warns us explicitly and repeatedly that we shall not find in our life with God a nice and quiet little niche outside the danger zone of life. God's chosen people must know that they are not chosen for themselves, but that they might be instruments for the continuing of God's work. Only in this sense is missionary work a biblical activity. Otherwise, it would no doubt be a highly respectable and a very humane effort to pluck as many souls as possible from the flames of hell and death, but it would in its compass fall short of the biblical outlook.

The Church is a communion of human beings who are connected with a non-Christian world in many respects. A man cannot by becoming a Christian detach himself from the vast community of mankind. There is no escape from the terrible solidarity of mankind for better and for worse. We share the burden of all, not because we are Christians but simply because we are men. It is the "condition humaine," and we cannot seclude ourselves from it.

Moreover, it is not the will of God that we should seek to escape the others. God does not think the world such a bad place to live in for His creatures. True, there are powers of evil that horrify us, we have to know that mankind has sinned again and again against God and His Law. And yet, it was God's honour that He created our world and that He could not forget the words He had spoken in His heart when He saw His creation: "it is good." That we might live in our time, notwithstanding the diabolic doings of our race, that too belongs to the secret of Christ's coming. Let me put it this way: Jesus Christ is the struggle in the heart of God to see mankind in its ultimate glory, and to forgive Adam's sons their estrangement from God's covenant. Let us not forget that according to St. Paul Christ is the second Adam, the new man.

Now here a new perspective is opening before us. We can view our situation from the second point of view. We stand in solidarity with those who are yet strangers, because only in this way will God give our world a future.

In the second epistle to the Corinthians the Apostle uses a very daring expression: "He (i.e. God) hath made Him (i.e. Christ) to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him" (5,21). It is the expression of the utmost solidarity with mankind. But it is a twofold solidarity. In the first place, Christ has become one of us; He shared the consequences of the life mankind has chosen in disobedience. He became one of the sons of Adam. In the second place: God Himself has undertaken that burden. God became our servant, that we might recognise Him as our Lord. In Christ a new generation is born, and He is the first-born among them. It is Christ as the new Adam.

Those who belong to His body have no option but to share the afflictions of their King. We are not "sacred" in contrast with the "profane"; but as our Lord is made to be sin, so shall we be. Our Christian solidarity with the world without God and without hope is not only based on the fact that we are all sons of Adam, but also on the still more important fact that our Lord, as the second Adam, is one with mankind as to His human nature and that we, incorporated

in Him and forming a body under His head, have to partake in His merciful and sacrificed existence.

So we understand that not only is there for God no such thing as a profane existence pure and simple ; but also that God does not wish us to separate ourselves from the world, when we are sanctified by Christ. We too are the first-fruits of the Kingdom. And therefore we are sanctified as a pure sacrifice for the redemption of God's creatures.

III. Primitive Christianity

After describing the fundamental biblical notions about the relations between the sacred and the secular, I turn to some important ways in which Christianity has fulfilled its task.

For the Christian generations before the fourth century, when Christianity was an illicit religion, the problem was rather simple. One had to defend oneself against the world ; and it is in these first centuries that the sense of what a witness had to be was developed.

That was understandable. The Christians lived in a pagan world ; their kindred and friends were pagans, and in nearly every activity, however insignificant, might lurk the devil of idolatry and apostasy. The time of the great persecutions is also the time of the astonishing development of ascetism, which simplified the problem by stating that the world was the realm of Satan. The relation between the spiritual and the temporal became simply that between the Kingdom of God and the power of the devil — in times of persecution the ascetics flocked in troops to the town that they might undergo the *martyrium*, and, in doing so, might prove to be in the possession of God's spirit. Christ and Satan, the children of light and the children of darkness : what intercourse can there be between the two ?

The thought of the purity of the Church was a very noble one ; and it had sound biblical roots. But there was a danger attached to it — the danger of barrenness. The great leaders of the Church have warned against the rigoristic and the ascetic trends, though they did acknowledge the heroic merits of the saints. They warned because they saw that this trend would lead to self-exaltation and to the sundering of the relations, commanded in the Gospel, between the spiritual and the temporal world. And, indeed, these dangers were not imaginary ; at the background of the great conflicts during the fourth century they can be discerned.

Of course, there were other trends in the life of the Church, even during the persecutions. In the first place, one is constantly reminded by the Christian authors that the Christians were exemplary citizens. They pay their taxes without a murmur, nay, gladly, they pray for the authorities, there is no drunk and disorderly behaviour among them. They were no revolutionary people — on the contrary. Why not ? First of all, because they reckoned this life of little importance in comparison with the glory that awaited them. Secondly, the authorities had the responsibility for order, and order was God's will, that His people might live in peace, necessary condition for good and fruitful works. The Christian is necessarily connected with the world, it is part of his task ; and prayer for those in authority, be they Christian or pagan, is part of the

mediatory task of God's people, sharing it with their Lord. For mediation has two sides : before the world Christ bears witness to the work of God, before God Christ bears witness for His people — that is the prayer of intercession in which the Christian has to share.

It was this tendency that was nearest the heart of God's message in the case of the relations between the spiritual and the secular in the first three centuries. Sometimes the Christians, in the bitterness of their anxiety and afflictions, have hated the world, and they have cried out against its sins and its evil ways. But they found consolation in looking to the glorious future, and in the knowledge that this world, for all its darkness, was made by God, and that they had to thank Him for His grace. This attitude held more promises for the future of Christianity in the world than many a deed of heroic asceticism.

IV. Constantine : A Turning Point

The first three centuries were far from idyllic. Manifold were the problems which confronted the Church, and her leaders did not always find the best solutions. But it was still possible to discern some simple pattern in the ways of God. The troubles lay ahead, and not behind, when Constantine and his successors discovered Christianity as a good thing and set about to use it as a prop for their tottering empire.

Eusebius has done much to propagate the idea of Constantine, not only as a good Christian or as a good emperor, but as a good Christian emperor. That is to say, he believed in a Christianity that would fit harmoniously into the pattern of life in this world ; and, though he was a great admirer of the martyrs, martyrdom he considered as an abnormality. In his famous *Church History* he tries constantly to disculpate the emperors. To put it perhaps a shade too sharply : martyrdom and persecution are to him tragic misunderstandings from the side of the world. So no wonder Eusebius and the other great court-prelates considered Constantine as a kind of saviour, a man of God, and Constantine concurred heartily in their admiration. In the Apostoleion in Constantinople he put thirteen cenotaphs in honour of the Apostles — the thirteenth was destined to become his own tomb.

But there were many Christians who were suspicious of the sudden prosperity of the Church ; and many found these suspicions confirmed in the course of the fourth century, when crisis after crisis befell the Church, and many an orthodox bishop had to leave his see in order that the Arian or semi-Arian minions of the Christian emperors might govern the Church. Moreover, the ascetics did not believe in the harmonious solution of the problem concerning the relations between the spiritual and the temporal in the form the court theologians saw it. They kept to the old ascetic notions which contrasted simply the world of God, unknown, unseemly, rejected in the eyes of this world, and the pomp and circumstance of the devil, clad in the imperial purple.

That was a unilateral point of view. But it is easily understandable. For the recognition of the Church by the State had important implications. The Church became a function of the State, and though theoretically the Church was sovereign in her own affairs, in reality the influence of the magistrates was great. There are many indications that the State expected something more from the Church than

prayer and preaching, and it certainly did not tolerate any serious criticism of its ways. Individually, yes : St. Ambrose could excommunicate the Emperor Theodosius to punish him for wantonness in massacring a city ; but as to the constitution itself, no. The Church had to be a pillar of society. In other words, it was bound to the interest of a secular power. Moreover, social conflicts became conflicts within the Church. There is every reason to suppose that the official Church and her stately orthodoxy did but represent a part of the Christian people. The fanatic spiritualism and heterodoxy of the medieval sects represent another side, politically as well as socially. And so the Church could no longer speak and act in the world as one body ; she was hampered by her implication in the affairs of the governments.

The serfdom of the Church had still another bad consequence. In the fourth century many found their way to Christianity, which was, under the circumstances, only natural. But the effect was that the boundary line between the communion of the faithful and the world became vague. It is indeed remarkable that the fourth century shows a reaction in favour of the baptism of adults, whereas in the previous century infant baptism had become a rather regular practice. Whereas in earlier times every member of the Church was a fully qualified Christian and conscious of belonging to a royal priesthood, notwithstanding the special functions of the bishop and the presbytery, now too many remained Christians-in-preparation ; they could not partake in the Eucharist. So the clergy became, as the fully qualified group of Christians, more than ever a separate class, and the laity lost their responsibilities. In the coming centuries only three parties would be interested in the real work of the Church : the bishops with their clergy, the monks, and the magistrates. The old theories still held good ; in fact, it was not before the twelfth century that dangerous new views were accepted ; but the practice was a deviation from the old standards.

It is a remarkable fact that the opposition against this development came from the side of the ascetics. But these people were not laymen in their own opinion. They were conscious of belonging to a special spiritual class, and when the Eastern Churches, during a certain period, recognised a special consecration of the monks, it is only a confirmation of an old ascetic persuasion. As a kind of irregular priest they took the lead in many a fight of the people against the established Church ; they called themselves the leaders of the saints and they acted as such. But it was a case of dignity against dignity, of special office against special office, and not a struggle of the laity against the clergy. The laity had no voice in the work of the Church, unless the layman was some high-ranking official in the State.

V. The Medieval System

It was under such circumstances that the hierarchy of the Church became a dangerous institution, and that the Church began to forget the biblical perspective on the relations between the sacred and the secular. True, many of the old elements remained ; what especially the monasteries have done in the service of the Lord is immeasurable. In the troubled times between the fall of the Roman Empire in the West and the Carolingian Age, it was the monks who had the initiative, the daring, the imagination and the courage to undertake the work of the Lord in missionary work.

On the other hand the bishops did little or nothing for the propagation of the Gospel in the vast rural districts of Western and Middle Europe. They were members of the ruling classes, and they shared their interests. For the Church had become part of the secular structure, a form of life of this world, and not a form of the world-to-come. It was looked upon as the height of man's natural life, and the old distinction between the old world and the new world became forgotten.

Out of this reality grew a new theory : the doctrine of the two swords. In the famous bull "Unam Sanctam," issued in 1302 by Pope Boniface VIII in his struggle with Philippe le Bel of France, the pope declares :

The words of the Gospel instruct us that there are two swords in the power (of St. Peter's successor), a spiritual one and a temporal one. For when the Apostles say : "Behold, here are two swords" (Luke 22, 38), that is to say, in the Church, the Lord does not answer : "it is too much," but : "it is enough." Now certainly he who denies that St. Peter has power over the temporal sword forgets the word of the Lord : "Put up again thy sword into his place" (Matt. 26, 52). Both, therefore, are in the power of the Church, the spiritual sword and the material sword ; but one has to be used on behalf of the Church, the other by the Church ; the first one belongs in the hands of the priest, the second in the hands of kings and soldiers, but only according to the will and the patience of the priest. Sword must be subjected to sword ; temporal authority to spiritual power. For when the Apostle says : "there is no power but of God ; the powers that be are ordained of God" (Rom. 13, 1) he means that they would not be ordained unless sword were under sword, and, as something of a lower order, were led to the supreme heights by the other sword. For, according to St. Denis, it is a divine law that the lower things by intermediary things are led to higher things. For according to the order of the universe things are not equal to each other or able to approach without mediation the higher things, but what is lowest needs to be led onward by intermediaries to higher aims in the order of the world.

I have chosen this passage because it contains all the elements of the way in which medieval Roman Catholicism considered its task in the world. The worst of the bull "Unam Sanctam" is not the abuse of biblical words, nor even the astonishing consciousness of power which it displays, but the way in which the place of the Church and her task is explained by means of neo-platonic philosophy. Boniface cites St. Denis, that is a collection of writings, in the Middle Ages known under the name of Paul's convert in Athens, and those books contain an application of neo-platonic principles to some parts of Christian theology. The centre of this mystical theology is the thought that the universe is graduated from the divine being to matter. There is a heavenly hierarchy around the throne of God, and it reflects itself in a hierarchical order upon earth. The Church is the exact reflection of the heavenly host of angels.

This system acknowledged only one way to ascend to God — the long way along the grades of the different circles. It is typical of this thinking that the attention is primarily focussed on the road man has to go to God, and not on the road God has gone to man. The holy world of God is here not so much something opposite to this world, but its crown. The fifth century mystics did not think in terms of the Judgment of God, but saw life with God as a kind of higher, more spiritual and less material life — as one got higher on the scale of the cosmos, one

lost one's bonds with the earth. It is in these circles that the humanity of Christ becomes a problem ; indeed, the so-called Monophysite heresy, which denied the identity of Christ's humanity with ours, is born out of such ideas.

The effect of the spiritualisation of the biblical message was calamitous. The old contrast between the world of God, obeying His word and keeping His covenant, and our world, got lost, and was replaced by the notion that man could, by ascending the grades of a continually more intense spirituality, rise above the earthly fetters and approach salvation. So the old pagan ideas about the sacred and the profane came back, triumphantly.

There was another effect, no less disastrous. Spiritualisation also meant secularisation : it nearly always does. Neo-platonic theology explained very well how the Christian state was a good thing, not to be contrasted, as the old world, with the coming Kingdom of the Lord. When Boniface in his bull tells the world : "If the earthly power deviates, it shall be judged by the spiritual power," it is a truth, for such is the task of the Church. But the corruption of the best is the worst ; the Church has become something comparable with the world, she takes part in the struggle for secular leadership. Let us thank God she has lost that battle. Dualism between Christian life and the world may be a bad thing ; gladly I grant it. But it is worse to believe that there is a simple continuity between an unregenerated world and the Kingdom of God. It is impossible on biblical grounds to maintain the statements on the relations between the spiritual and the secular in the heyday of the medieval Church as if they make a Christian sense.

And lastly, it meant the exclusion of the laity from the work of the Church. To begin with a practical reason : the laity belonged to the profane order of things, and they were, therefore, a potential enemy, only to be subdued and led to the true life by the clergy. We have already seen what Boniface VIII had to say about clerical leadership. From this pope to his far predecessor, Leo I, in the middle of the fifth century, it is a long way, and not only in a temporal sense. Leo could say that "the Church receives as leaders those whom the Holy Ghost has prepared ; in order that in the people God adopted, whose communion is priestly and royal, no prerogative of earthly origin would receive the unction, but heavenly mercy produce the leader" (*Sermo* 3, 1). Those wise and Christian words were forgotten by Boniface. And, be the hierarchy never so well organised, the Church loses its consciousness of being the body of Christ. It was not the hierarchical organisation as such that caused this calamitous development. The question of the hierarchy in itself has little or nothing to do with the problem which confronts us. As long as there is a consciousness of the priesthood of all who have received the Holy Ghost, the question whether there should be a special sacerdotry has no bearing whatever upon the relation between the spiritual and the temporal. Leo the Great knew himself a priest among priests and a king among kings. It only becomes a dangerous thing and an unbiblical thing when the ministry considers itself a priest among profane, and a king among subjects. And such was the case at the end of the Middle Ages : the priest had to lead the laity on to higher things, out of the sphere of the profane, and that meant that the layman did not, and must not, have any other responsibility than obedience. Hence the vehement protests that would end in the Reformation.

VI. The Reformation Outlook

By the time of the Reformation, the failure of the Church to establish a really Christian relation between the spiritual and the secular had become clear to anyone who was not quite blinded with partiality or personal interest. New ways had to be found. I can only make some general remarks about the different answers which have been given by the different types of Reformation.

But first I want to say something about the Roman Catholicism of the Counter-Reformation. The trends of it do not notably differ from the medieval views. Though many abuses were abolished, the root of the matter remained untouched. The basis of the work of the Church remained the Christian society and the Christian state ; and it is only in our times that Roman Catholic theologians and ecclesiastical workers seek new definitions of the relation between the sacred and the secular. The so-called "nouvelle théologie" led by theologians like Daniélou and Lubac ; in the aesthetic field the work of the Dominican Abbé Couturier, the recently deceased sponsor of a new ecclesiastical art ; the work of the *prêtres-ouvriers* — all these are signs of a new mobility of the Church in a well-nigh totally secularised world. But we know too that Rome issues warning after warning and measure after measure ; and those warnings and measures only show that the old spirit of the Counter-Reformation is not yet dead in the highest circles of this Church.

The Reformation began by posing the question of the relation between the spiritual and the temporal not immediately in the field of political issues. It was a struggle for a new biblical understanding of the relations between God and man. In the course of this struggle Luther as well as Calvin discovered the impossibility of the scheme : sacred and profane. Without God, and therefore profane, is only he who is disobedient ; and God has, in sending His Son, joined the "profane" to Himself. There is no such thing as a special sacred domain, and the Church cannot sanctify the world otherwise than by confessing Christ and bearing witness to His Kingdom by preaching His Word and administering His sacraments.

VII. Conclusion

In our time the problem has again become a burning one. What is the task of the Church in the world ? Must she try to establish some sort of Christian way of life ? Bonhoeffer says no ; and there are many who think as he did. Personally, I am inclined to subscribe to this vision. Others think that there is a necessity for Christian forms of life, from a pastoral point of view as well as from a theological point of view. In a world that in many ways is estranged from the old Christian standards and values, it will be necessary to look at the problem in a new way. There is nothing quite comparable in history with this situation. The first generations of the Church stood and fought in the midst of a pagan world, and their great problem was first of all how to prepare a soil, poisoned by the weeds of paganism. The Reformation had to struggle for a new vision, while hindered by an age-long tradition of a corrupted Christian world. But for us there is a blankness, a world without real religious bonds, a world much more uncertain of itself than any of the former generations.

Yet we have one certainty — the commandment the Lord gave when He left His disciples : “All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost ; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you.” Jesus gave no cut-and-dried solutions for this problem. But He gave them something better than that : “Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world” (Matt. 28, 20). And in that faith we can proclaim, as Evanston does in the central theme of the coming Assembly, Jesus Christ, the hope of the world.

ACCEPTING THE WORLD

An Anglican Point of View

Notes from a lecture given by Dr. Kathleen Bliss

It is not at all easy to take part in an ecumenical symposium in which one is supposed to describe Anglican doctrines, in contrast with Lutheran or Reformed doctrines. If you were to ask our learned theologians, our leading bishops "What is the Anglican doctrine of this or that?", the most likely answer you would get would be "We haven't any specifically *Anglican* doctrines." One reason for this is that we have no Luther or Calvin in Anglicanism, no authoritative fountain-head of exposition and we have no confessional documents like, say, the Westminster Confession. A much stronger reason is that Anglicanism has always sought to be comprehensive, to make the Church a home both for those who held by the old ways in worship, and for those who were convinced protagonists of Reform, to exclude as few people as possible. If you like this Anglican comprehensiveness, you speak of the Anglican *via media*: if you don't like it you speak of the Anglican compromise! In their search for a Christian comprehensiveness, Anglicans have laid stress on Holy Scripture, which in the words of our Book of Common Prayer "containeth all things necessary to salvation"; and they have also laid stress on the importance of continuity between the present and the past. They look back on the whole sweep of the history of the Church from New Testament times and consciously strive to maintain a continuity of doctrine, church order, etc. Thus, if anything were credited to Anglicans as a specifically *Anglican* doctrine, they would begin to be suspicious!

Where then can one look for what has inspired and moulded the present-day Anglican's view of the relation of the sacred and the secular, the spiritual and the temporal? First, of course, to the Book of Common Prayer. This is a book of worship, and it is the only specifically Anglican standard of reference for Anglicans. It is also, with the historic episcopate (which is however shared with some non-Anglican churches), the only bond which holds together the world-wide Anglican communion. Within that communion different Anglican churches hold somewhat differing views, attributable to their history and circumstances, and on nothing do they diverge so much as on the subject of this present symposium. You will therefore see that I have to talk as an English Anglican, fully conscious that the Church of England is not the same thing as "Anglicanism." One looks first to the Prayer Book: but as with persons, so with churches, one finds out a lot about what they believe by looking at their lives and their history, and Anglican history is a good guide to Anglican belief.

It is proper in a group of laymen and women for me to point out what a strong role the laity have played in shaping the destinies of the Church of England, and, indirectly, of the whole Anglican communion. Dr. Hensley Henson, one-time Bishop of Durham, says in his lectures on Anglicanism given to a Swedish audience that the Reformation in England was the work of the laity. It was among the

laity that the desire for the reform of the Church first took root. A hundred and fifty years before the actual break with Rome, John Wycliffe, an Oxford don, stirred the English laity to think of reform. Many characteristically Reformation teachings appear in his widely circulated English tracts — the priesthood of all believers, the non-necessity of any mediator between the individual and Christ, the evil of many religious practices of the day, the enormity of the pretensions of the Bishop of Rome. Wycliffe made the first, and one of the greatest, translations of the Bible into English. The mere possession of a copy of this Bible meant condemnation as a heretic in succeeding years and Wycliffe's followers were persecuted for their bold claim that the affairs of the Church are the responsible concern of the laity of the Church. But this basic idea never died, and without it the political aspect of the Reformation in England would never have been carried through. In suppressing the monasteries, the King had the support of a laity which had for years been asking what right monks had to shirk the responsibilities of ordinary men. In breaking with Rome, he had the support of a long tradition of resentment against the exactions of Rome which fell so heavily on the laity and on the parish clergy. The King and the laity, represented in Parliament, reformed the outward institution of the Church and did it by political means: when this was well advanced the impetus to spiritual reform re-asserted itself within the new framework.

It was one thing for the doctrine of the responsibility of the laity in church affairs to be enunciated and widely accepted. But how was it to be made effective? To the Englishman of the 16th century it was quite clear that the right and proper way for the laity to act was through Parliament. Bishops were (and still are) members of the Upper House of Parliament, and the laity looked to the Lower House as the place where their views could be made active. Why was this position, that the laity exercise their church responsibilities in part through Parliament, so readily accepted? The answer lies in English history. The English were converted by Roman missionaries in the fifth century. That conversion did not repeat the history of the early church: English Christians were never a minority, mostly poor, on whom the state frowned. Among the earliest converts in England were kings and queens and their courts. Church and nation were so closely identified that opposition between church and state was unthinkable. Norman kings more rigorously divided church and state: church courts administering Canon Law were set up, and Englishmen experienced a legal system that was foreign to them, administered largely by foreigners. To assume a close identity of church and *nation* was natural to Englishmen, and the relation of church and state was derived from this prior relation of church to nation.

An exalted conception of the status of the laity in the Church also played a part in one of the most important features of the reformation in England, the break with the Pope and the recognition of the King as supreme governor in the Church. This was emphatically viewed as a lay function, the king being a layman *sui generis*, not in any sense a priest, but a Christian prince in a Christian nation. Most Anglicans would feel that on the whole church-state relations in England have worked well in the past and in some respects still work well in the present. But all thoughtful Anglicans admit the seriousness of the break between church and nation: active church members are only a small minority. From this two schools of thought have arisen: one maintains that since the nation cannot any longer be called "Christian" the present church-state relationship is highly

dangerous for a church whose bishops are chosen by the Prime Minister, and whose very doctrine is finally at the mercy of Parliament which alone can sanction changes in the Prayer Book. The other school maintains that problems of church-state relations are now less, not more, important: the real problem is that of church and nation, a problem common to all Anglican churches, and indeed to all churches.

What then does the Anglican church regard as the right relation of church and nation? An attempt to summarise what is nowhere made explicit in Anglican doctrine, is made in a recent Church Assembly report on "Church and State." The Church of England belongs to the type of church which "aims at including whole peoples and not only a select few. Its procedure is gradually to permeate rather than to challenge or condemn. It is receptive of the secular culture and civilisation amid which it is placed. It is tolerant of anomalies in logic and of compromise in practice. It regards the State as ordained of God. For it 'the church is the great educator of the nations and like all educators she knows how to allow for various degrees of capacity and maturity and how to attain her end by a process of adaptation and compromise' (Troeltsch)."

Within Anglicanism there is a great diversity of view on what the state is and on Christian action in relation to it. Even within the Church of England we have great variety: the Evangelical group of the early 19th century worked for the abolition of slavery and used Parliament as the means to its ends. It was the first group of any kind to mobilise the power of public opinion to put moral pressure on a government — an example frequently followed, but hardly ever with such success. We have had members of the Catholic wing working for social reform by different methods, equally effective. We have social gossellers and their opposites, protagonists of the welfare state and opponents of it, we have Anglicans closely identified with every political party and the church itself committed to none. The lack of enunciated doctrine or of any supreme authority to whom to return leaves the individual free. But the Church of England owes a great debt to the English Free Churches which have stood for principles which it has never seen or has forgotten and have continually challenged its establishment, its use of state-conferred powers, its too ready identification of itself with the nation, and its complacency.

Yet behind these diversities within Anglicanism there is unquestionably an Anglican cast of mind, an attitude to the temporal world, hard to describe but not difficult to recognise. It is an attitude which accepts the world as God's creation and rejoices in it. Hence the Anglican ideal of life in the world is not puritanical or ascetic but sacramental. This Anglican ideal of life is far better expressed by the fine group of 17th century English poets than by any Anglican theological writing.

I have tried to express what I as an individual Anglican feel about the Anglican concept of spiritual and temporal, sacred and secular. But I must say that I think we are all of us, Lutherans, Anglican, Reformed etc., in a present situation which makes our differences of view of very small importance. We are confronted by a problem of the secular unknown to the Reformers. For them the secular was all that pertains to this passing world of eating, having children and ordering social life; a world of necessity which, for all its transience was still sustained by God's action, and ordered by His power. Men not only believed in God; He was a practical necessity of daily life.

Modern secularisation is a new phenomenon, brought by a new culture. Herbert Butterfield, an English historian, who among other things has written a history of science, says that Christians have not yet realised that there has grown up within Christendom a new civilisation "strange as a Nineveh or Babylon," the civilisation created by science. Scarcely a single thought about the world remains unchanged. If it were a case of God having become remote from our contemporaries, efforts could be concentrated on making Him seem nearer. But for most of them He is not so much remote as utterly unreal, unthinkable and above all *unnecessary*. In the ordinary man's experience life goes on without there being any need for God: fertilisers produce better crops than prayer, and contraceptives are a better insurance against having too many mouths to feed than faith in Providence.

Our contemporary problem of the secular is that it has become autonomous. Nobody saw this problem more clearly or stated it better than Dietrich Bonhoeffer. "Man," he "wrote, has learned to cope with all questions of importance without recourse to God as a working hypothesis. In questions concerning science, art and even ethics, this has become an understood thing... it is becoming evident that everything gets along without God, and just as well as before." But Bonhoeffer refused to bewail this situation and to identify it with a sinful rebellion against God. The phrase he uses to summarise this process is that "man has achieved adulthood." "The attack of Christian apologetic upon the adulthood of the world I consider to be in the first place pointless, in the second ignoble and in the third un-Christian." Even more important he saw the non-necessity of God to philosophy and even to religion. "Our coming of age forces us to a true recognition of our situation vis-à-vis of God. God is teaching us that we must live as men who can get on very well without him."

There seem to me enormous possibilities for the development of a true vocation of the laity based on solid theological foundations, in what Bonhoeffer says about being a Christian in a world which has grown up and can no longer be touched by the argument of the necessity of God. "The Christian is not a *homo religiosus* but a man, pure and simple, just as Jesus was a man." The Christian "must plunge himself into the life of a godless world. He must live a 'worldly' life, and so participate in the suffering of God... To be a Christian does not mean to be religious in a particular way, but to be a man. It is not some religious act which makes a Christian what he is, but participation in the suffering of God in the world." And again "it is only by living completely in this world that one learns to believe."

GROWING INTO ADULTHOOD *

A Lutheran Point of View

Heinz Zahrnt

I.

The Kirchentag is a movement of the laity. But if anyone imagines that the questions under discussion deal only with such matters as whether the layman shall stand by the pastor's side at the altar, whether he should do part of the preaching or play a more responsible part in church organisation — such a person has no idea whatever what the real problems are. All the questions just mentioned can be settled fairly quickly, given understanding and good will on both sides. By and large we should like to say that over-emphasis on the importance of the clergy should be avoided, and that free scope should be given to responsibility and initiative.

But it must not be imagined that the problem is thereby solved. It lies much deeper and has much wider repercussions. If so much is said today about "the laity," and if the layman is beginning (often in a dim and unconscious way) to ask about himself and to look for his place, then this is only an expression of the general situation in which we find ourselves. In order to understand the problem of the laity properly, we must look at it within the framework of Western thought as a whole. The real question is the true position of man between God and the world.

II.

In pre-Christian times man was completely surrounded by the cosmos. He was embedded in nature. He was not separate from the universe; he was himself part of it. Of course, he reflected about the universe. But the reason why he reflected was, in order to derive meaning and law from it. Although he thought about the universe, he was still part of it himself. This pre-Christian state of affairs is expressed by Paul as follows: "Ye were subject to the law; ye were in slavery to the world."

When the cosmos is experienced as a closed unit, then there is no distinction between spiritual and secular government. The spheres of religion and politics are bound up with one another. In Israel it was just the same as in Greece. In the Old Testament the people was at the same time "the Church," and in Greece the *polis* represented a religious factor.

But the pre-Christian world was divided by another line of demarcation: it was divided into "sacred" and "profane." A special quality is attributed to certain objects, dealings and persons in their relation to God, and so they are

* Taken from *Sonntagsblatt*, Hamburg, edited by Hanns Lilje, with kind permission of author and publishers.

isolated from the world and described as "holy." Direct access to God is not open to every individual; it is the privilege of a special class. These are the priests whose duty is to protect the law and to officiate at the religious ceremonies. They are the "clergy" as contrasted with the "laity" — the ordinary people.

But the Christian revelation brought about a complete change. After Christ the position of man between God and the universe is entirely different from what it was before Christ. The universe is no longer understood as a unity in itself, but as God's creation, and man is no longer part of nature, no longer a slave of the elements, but the son who has free access to the Father. The cosmic circle is thereby broken; man is freed from the wheel of destiny. He is no longer part of the universe; he stands apart and confronts it. God has placed the creation under man's rule. Man has become free, and is responsible for shaping the world as he wishes. "Everything is yours, and you are Christ's, and Christ is God's."

Man has become mature, and the distinction between the sacred and profane spheres has been swept away. If the whole world is God's creation, then nothing in it is further from or nearer to God than anything else. "Every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving." (I. Timothy 4 : 4.) Everyone is now in direct relationship with God. There are no longer priests and laymen; they are all members of God's people.

At the same time due recognition is given to the special honour and dignity of the secular powers. The spheres of religion and politics are not separated, but a distinction is drawn between them. And the Christian has to keep this distinction in mind while recognising both spheres. "Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's." That means freeing religion from politics, and freeing politics from myths.

This "conformity to the world" that comes with Christianity was, however, quickly forgotten. Under the Emperor Constantine an event occurred which had not been foreseen in the New Testament: the world became Christian. Again there arose a closed cosmos into which man was fitted — not a heathen world this time but a Christian one. This was the Christian world of medieval times. As a remarkable parallel to the pre-Christian era, religious and secular government are united. A distinction is still drawn, however, between the sacred and profane spheres. The priesthood is still distinct from the laity.

It was Luther who again broke up this Christian medieval cosmos, which by his time was already in a state of decay. Luther was not a secular agitator; he was consciously linked to the Word of God and he did not want less religion, but more. He based his attack on the very heart of the Christian revelation. When speaking of its historical importance, Luther always described it from two points of view: he said that he had re-discovered the Gospel, and that he had restored respect for the secular orders and authorities. The two belong together; one is the outcome of the other. The re-discovery of the Gospel means that man again has free access to God; he can come to God like a child to his father. His free access does not depend upon any law or any condition; it depends solely upon free grace and upon faith. And this means the end of the mediation of the priesthood. "All Christians are really members of the priesthood and there is no difference between them . . . Anyone who has emerged from baptism may boast that he has been consecrated as a priest, bishop and pope, although it is not seemly for everyone to practise such an office."

But when man comes of age in this way, it means the end of tutelage by the clergy; the secular orders and authorities then recover their own respect and dignity. And the place where faith must be practised in obedience is not some remote sphere, but a man's secular "occupation." But a man does not learn what he should do in his daily occupation from the Church nor from the Bible; he must consult his own reason. "In the secular sphere one must act on reason, for God has made man's reason subject to the temporal authorities; He did not send the Holy Spirit from heaven for that purpose." "Therefore God does not teach us in the Bible how to build houses, how to make clothes, how to marry, how to make war, how to steer ships and things of that sort; for our natural reason is sufficient for those things." And there is no difference between sacred and profane action. Everything that man does in faith is "holy" — even carting straw.

Thus Luther shows the way to a real "secularism" derived from the Gospel itself. We are bound to see what would have happened to the world, if it had followed this course. But even before Luther appeared on the scene, another kind of secularisation was in process. That was the great movement for emancipation which started with the Renaissance, became strong and powerful during the Age of Enlightenment, and is today moving towards a catastrophic end. It is false secularism — secularism without God. Here again man releases himself from involvement with the universe and stands aloof from it; but at the same time he breaks his links with the Christian faith. Here again the universe is the creation (it can never be anything more), but it is not God's creation; it is man's creation. Man has taken the place of God. The onus therefore now lies upon man to give meaning to the universe and to determine what is good and what is evil. But this is a task that is too heavy for him. Man's creative activity has become purely destructive. In his hands the cosmos has become chaos, and he himself has again become a slave of the elements.

III.

That is therefore the final result: secularism has run amok. Western man has failed to sustain his position between God and the universe. He has concentrated upon the universe, but he has let God be God, and this has overthrown his relation to the universe; he himself has again become part of the universe. Secularism would never have become so rampant, indeed it could never have taken place at all, if it had not contained a sincere impulse, a justifiable concern: to be free in its relation to the world — that conformity to the world which has its roots in the Christian faith.

One expression of this problem is that impulse which we describe as "the lay movement." This means no more and no less than that man is again seeking his position between God and the world. Man is sincerely shocked about the disorder of the world and longs for a new life, a *vita nova*. But people today do not seek this *vita nova* as a "sacred" activity, side by side with their "secular" life; the politician does not want to carry on his politics and his religion in separate, water-tight compartments; the doctor does not want to separate his profession from his faith; married people do not wish their life together to have no connection with their faith; no, people today want to express their faith in practice, through their lives.

No greater mistake could be made than to attempt to restore the Christian cosmos of medieval times. We cannot return to the times before secularism ! This lays all talk about "the Christian West" open to suspicion. God's revelation does not give us any law that would enable us to establish a Christian cosmos, and thus save a world which seems to have passed beyond hope of redemption. Man is now mature and we must leave him the freedom that belongs to his divine sonship. Our task is not to force the world to conform to clerical ways, but to secularise Christianity !

And now the "laity" and the "theologians" must share this task. The laity are specialists and can tell the Church what ought to be done in the sphere where they work. The politicians must tell us how we ought to order human society ; parents must tell us how children should be brought up ; teachers must tell us what should happen in school ; employers and workers must tell us how they come to agreements in industry.

And the theologians ? What have they to do ? Simply, to preach the Gospel ! That means, they must continually remind everyone that the world is God's good creation and that man owes everything to God, everything that he is and has ; so that people may not use their freedom against God but for Him. Today pastors are expected to do the impossible. People would like them to do everything. But this claim is only the outcome of a false way of thinking, which imagines it possible to christianise the cosmos. After having failed to christianise the macrocosm, people want to turn the pastor into a Christian microcosm. How relieved the pastor will be, if he can confine himself to his real work — the preaching of the Gospel. Of course, he must preach it in such a way that it is comprehensible to his contemporaries. And this means that he must have daily contact with the "specialists" in the Church, i.e. with the laity, who know what is going on in the world. Thus secularised Christianity makes laymen and theologians dependent on one another.

THE LAY MINISTRY IN THE WORLD

A Reformed Point of View

Notes from a lecture given by Professor Jacques Ellul

Many Christians think that the laity must simply act, and that their actions will justify themselves. Before we talk of the task of the laity we must first define their ministry : the ministry of the laity is that of Incarnation. In Christian life the Word of God must be incarnated in this world, to bear witness so that men may be converted. It is not the task of the laity to christianise the world, nor is their ministry in the first place a ministry of the Word. In lay men and lay women the world meets the Church. To be this point of encounter is the Christian vocation of the laity in the world, and therefore no specific occupation or profession as such can be identified with "vocation." God calls us all. He calls us to repent, to believe and to incarnate. The questions we must ask are : What does this Incarnation mean, and what are the consequences we must draw for our lives ?

The Incarnation of Jesus Christ signifies an unbearable situation : Jesus Christ became man, thus becoming the enemy of God. There is no explanation for this Incarnation. It is an act which defies reason. Jesus did not choose a more acceptable situation nor was this situation ever repeated. To realise the uniqueness of this fact implies that when we live out our faith we cannot expect it to be in agreement with the reason of the world.

Christian faith in this world stands as a sign of contradiction. The Christian has to make up his mind : he is not called to solve this conflict between the world and his faith, or to find a balance between the two. Nor can the world overcome this antagonism (christianised professions, occupations etc.). All we Christians can do is state the fact that there is this contradiction which is unacceptable to us. We cannot do away with this situation, which we must therefore envisage (eschatologically) *sub specie aeternitatis*. We live in it, and it is important to fight because there are lives of human beings at stake.

We live in a world which is neither good nor evil ; good and evil are to be found in man. Thus it is wrong, for instance, to think that because they are an invention of man, technics are against God. Through its autonomy this world has separated itself from God ; it has its own laws, its motives, its necessities. Those who accept the Word of God must therefore affirm it against the world, knowing that the world has been overcome through the Incarnation of Christ. What we achieve in affirming the Word of God, we do not achieve because of our profession, but despite it.

By our faith we are led to decisions which in the eyes of the world are follies. Our acts cannot serve as an example to others. A "moral" could be imitated. But Christianity is not a "moral" — again, it is folly. We are always tempted to expect that other men will act like Christians. This is in itself impossible : it is

normal for them not to act like Christians. They may seemingly act like Christians, there are things which they have in common with Christians, but their action is not the fruit of faith. In the Middle Ages the Church demanded a "Christian behaviour." To expect that there could be such a thing as "implicit" faith is heresy.

The sharing of all things in common undertaken by the primitive Church in Jerusalem did not last. Such things are not imitable. A challenge cannot be institutionalised: it is always temporary. In our churches we are often tempted to make things last, instead of trying to invent new ones.

The laity are in closest contact with the changes of this world, and it is therefore up to them to invent the form in which the challenge must be thrown out. For the life of the world, too, it is important that Christians renew their challenge constantly. Once the Church ceases to be a shock, the world lacks something — although it organises itself in its own way. It is the world and thus it cannot but organise itself against God.

We must now turn to the reality which the Incarnation can assume at the present day. Our presence in this world implies participation in it. Participation means being active, and in view of what has been said so far it means entering the line of challenge.

1) The Christian must desacralise what the world does. The Incarnation is to the world what Jesus Christ is to the religions. If the world were really profane, it would be different. But as it is the world is full of idols and obsessions. This task of desacralisation is extremely difficult: Christians have to say No to the eschatology of modern man. Even among convinced Christians we suddenly come across an idol of some kind (e.g. their profession). One suddenly finds that one believes in what one does. But one can hardly help it, because there must be something which makes man work for eight hours a day, he cannot do it for nothing. And there it is again: work is made an idol! By desacralising the things man does we restore man to his true condition. This work of desacralisation must be done quietly, without many words, by acts (e.g. by giving: to give money desacralises money).

2) The Christian has also to demystify the world. Man does not only create things in which he then believes, he also seeks to justify himself. He must be shown that his justifications are fallacious. But while working at this demystification Christians must beware of justifying their own actions — an error into which the churches have very often fallen, e.g. in the theology of work, in sayings like "serving work is serving God," *laborare est orare*. Such justifications are dangerous, because through them we try to avoid an encounter with God. We must always mistrust any sudden social success of what is thought to be a Christian attitude (Ford: "It pays to be a Christian"). A good worker, a good doctor have a so-called professional conscience which must not be identified with the fruit of faith. (On the other hand, it is wrong for a Christian to justify his professional failures through his faith.) In this connection the attitude of communising Christians can also be mentioned; all they demand is good work, and the rest is left to look after itself. But this is extremely dangerous: the world is out to have the blessing of the Christians, and accepts eagerly any Christians who lend themselves to its acts, thus justifying them. It is the task of Christians to destroy this apparent agreement between the world and faith, and they can do it because they do not need to justify themselves, for Jesus has justified them.

3) Christians must refuse any compromise. Jesus Christ is not a compromise, half God, half man. He was true God and true man. We must never come to believe that the miracle is impossible.

As an example we can take the difficulty of language. It was suggested in our discussions that grace might be expressed by terms such as goodness, kindness, amiability. We achieve nothing through such procedures, because grace is neither goodness, nor kindness, nor amiability, nor anything but grace.

We must make our choice. The imperative of the Word of God stands against all propositions of the world. In history we have seen many compromises : explicit compromises in theology, and countless implicit compromises of those who follow the march of time while "remaining" Christians. A glance at the history of France reveals that Christians were in turn royalists, republicans, imperialists, for war, against war. Compromising Christians just follow the sociological trends and justify themselves somehow. To see what is involved and to make a choice presupposes lucidity.

It is therefore the task of the layman to keep up this dialectical tension between the world and Christian faith which is the tension of those who spread and those who refuse the Word of God. Once Christians have desacralised and demystified the world there is still a great and urgent task left to be done — that of proclaiming the Kingdom of God. The things man deals with must be given a place in the Kingdom to come. As soon as we discover a thing to be dead ("Let the dead bury their dead"), we must turn away from it and give ourselves to a new task.

It is clear therefore that the ministry of the laity is a very precise task. Only the laity can perform it (the clergy have a specific ministry) ; individual Christians have to carry out this work which will never be a mass action ; laymen will work in small teams, in shock groups without aiming at bringing about an institutional transformation of professions and occupations.

The solution is to give Christian laymen a thorough training both in respect of reality (general education rather than specialisation) and of theology (fundamental Christian education). Only thus can they be prepared to accomplish a task which is extremely demanding and difficult.

ROMAN CATHOLIC THEOLOGY AND THE LAITY

A Survey

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It is an undeniable fact that 20th century theologians have paid particular attention to the laity. But it would be incorrect to think that the "theology of the laity" was born only in the 20th century. The *status* or *ordo* (in medieval language) of the layman frequently gave rise to reflection and discussion. And in a recent article entitled *Moines, Clercs, Laïcs*, Father Chenu reminds us, among other things, that already in the 12th century a theologian wondered "how the tax-collectors, the judges, the soldiers, the merchants and the farmers can also live the apostolic life, namely the Christian life of the Apostles"¹. It remains true, however, that during the process of systematisation that the branch of dogmatic theology dealing with the Church has passed through since the 15th century and the Reformation, the position of the laity in the Church has not developed as much (for example) as the doctrine of the episcopacy and of hierarchical authority. The result is a certain lack of balance in the structure. The books under review here do much to remedy this. The purpose of this article is to make known the very extensive contemporary Catholic literature which is devoted to this important question.

The most important work on this subject written by a contemporary Catholic is *Jalons pour une théologie du laïc*² by Father Yves Congar, the French Dominican. This book alone would suffice to show that the doctrine of the laity is already having important repercussions. The substance of this book (theological reflections and bibliography) is an answer to many questions that are troubling Christians. What is a layman? What difference is there between a monk and a layman? Between a clergyman and a layman? Does the Church define itself as "the people of God" or as the "hierarchy"? Is the section of dogmatic theology dealing with the Church adequately balanced on this point? What is the relation between the Kingdom of God, the Church and the world? What is the priestly function of the laity, and what does it involve? What is the "royal" function of the laity in the Church? What is their prophetic and doctrinal function? What is their specifically "apostolic" mission? How can they be in the world without being of it? How can they be guided so that they may be sanctified in the world? All these questions are dealt with in chapters of this very rich volume; it is impossible to summarise its 684 pages, which convincingly prove that the theological doctrine of the laity has reached its climax. At a time when everything in the world speaks of man's "promotion" on the social, political, economic and every other secular plane, it is not surprising that the doctrine of the Christian's "promotion" in the order of redemption and in church life is arousing increasing interest. The laity are no longer the "passive" Church; they are an organic part of it, the people of God, and have the right to enjoy a special vocation in the Church, an inalienable function, a specific mission.

¹ Cf. *Revue d'histoire ecclésiastique* (Louvain, 1954, pp. 59-89), which quotes Gerhoch de Reichersberg, *Liber de aedificio Dei*, C. 43, dans *Patrol. Latina*, t. 194, c. 1302.

² Yves M.-J. Congar, *Jalons pour une théologie du laïc* (Unam Sanctam N° 23) (Paris, Edition du Cerf, 1953, 684 pp.).

Other books dealing with the general question of the rôle of the laity in the Church are: *Le rôle du laïc dans l'Eglise* by G. Philips, Professor at the University of Louvain (Cahiers de l'actualité religieuse, Paris-Tournai, Caserman, 1954). This touches on every aspect of the question (powers of the laity, spirituality) but in a general way, and without the historical research contained in Congar's book. — An excellent article entitled "Le laïc chrétien dans le dessein de Dieu" by A. Chavasse, Professor at the University of Lyons (published in *Eglise vivante* 1952, pp. 155-181) stresses the missionary aspect of the laity. — *Die Stellung der Laien in der Kirche nach dem kanonischen Recht* by E. Rösser (Würzburg, 1949) discusses the position of the laity in the Canon Law of the Catholic Church. — Two books by J. Folliet discuss Christians in the modern world. Their titles are *Les chrétiens au carrefour* (Lyon, Chronique sociale, 1947) and *Présence de l'Eglise* (Lyon, Chronique sociale, 1949). — In *Sens chrétien de l'homme*, J. Mouroux discusses the meaning of man in general (Paris, Aubier, 1945).

One of the main elements in Father Congar's thought is the distinction he makes between *the Community-Church* consisting of believers and *the Church as an institution*. "The reality described by the word 'Church,' as used in Christian circles, includes two aspects between which a clear distinction must be drawn . . . In its final reality the Church is the communion of men with God, and with one another, through Christ. It is also the means of achieving this communion . . . As the community of the faithful, the Church is the practical expression of salvation (Heilsgemeinschaft); it is also the means of being called to salvation — taking the word in its widest sense, one might say the sacrament of this reality (Heilsanstalt)"¹. During the course of centuries some theologians have emphasised one aspect of the Church, some another, according to circumstances. Especially during the Reformation they insisted very strongly on the mediation of the ecclesiastical hierarchy. And it is an incontestable fact that there are appreciable differences between Bellarmine's definition of the Church (1621) and that developed in the Encyclical *Mystici Corporis Christi* (1943).

What is the position of the laity in relation to the *priestly mediation of the Church*? The priestly mediation is brought about solely through the Person of the Incarnate Word, the Man-God. But Christ wishes to communicate with men and, in so doing, to pass on to them some of his own mediating power. His first gift to men is his holiness, through the Holy Spirit, and a share in the divine life. This gift from God enables man to offer supernatural praises to God — a service of worship raised to the order of grace, a prayer of intercession and penitence. Exercised "in God" or "in the Spirit," this mediation forms a real "spiritual priesthood," fit for all those who form the "people of God."

Christ also communicates something of his visible religion and his "Christian" liturgy, concretely the sacraments. Here it is a question of visible rites, instituted by Christ, to which he has added the gift of Grace. We must be in a state to receive these rites; that is one of the results of baptism. There must also be certain subordinate ministers who are the earthly instruments of the one supreme Minister, the glorious Christ; these are the priests (in the ministerial and functional sense of the word, those who are "ordained") and those who have been baptised (in the case of marriage the "authors of the contract" being the "ministers of the sacrament"). Hence, even in this sacramental order, the baptised laity have a certain ministerial function. Their share in the liturgical

¹ *Op. cit.* pp. 46, 51.

life of the Church is even greater, but a long article would be required to describe this, in all its "nuances."

Important chapters on this question of the "Christian priesthood" will be found in *Jalons pour une théologie du laïcat* by Father Congar (pp. 246-307). He mentions particularly the "priesthood" of fathers and mothers within the family, the priesthood of the martyrs, and the very important mediation of those who receive the sacrament of confirmation. The word "priesthood," used to indicate the "spiritual priesthood," may lend itself to some confusion: that is the conclusion drawn by B. Botte, A. Charlier, A. Robeyns and B. Cappelle in their historical enquiry *Le sacerdoce des fidèles* (Louvain, Abbaye du Mont-César, 1934, 56 pp.).

What exactly is meant by the biblical expression "a royal priesthood"? The question is answered in an excellent article by L. Cerfaux, Professor at the University of Louvain, "Regale sacerdotium" in the *Revue des sciences philosophiques et théologiques* (1939, pp. 5-39). As for the history and use of this expression in theology, both in the past and today, the reader is referred to the thorough enquiry undertaken by P. Dabin, *Le sacerdoce royal des fidèles dans la tradition ancienne et moderne* (Brussels, 1950). The wealth of the documents makes up for some of the defects due to the vastness of the subject.

Is it part of the rôle of the laity to teach in the Church? Catholic ecclesiology is not very explicit on this subject. The reason for this is incontestably that it developed in face of the Reformation, and was somewhat suspicious about biblical exegesis put forward by any church member, under the inspiration of the Spirit, without the check of some doctrinal authority. There is a very interesting chapter on this subject in *Jalons pour une théologie du laïcat* by Father Congar (pp. 367-449). Distinguishing between the "teaching Church" and the "taught Church" does not mean distinguishing between the "active Church" and the "passive Church" on doctrinal matters. Franzelin expressed it better when he said that Christians enjoy infallibility "by believing," *in credendo*, and that the hierarchy do so "by teaching," *in docendo*. It might be more correct to say that Our Lord promised infallibility to the Church as a whole. And M. J. Scheeben, in his *Dogmatique* (1873-1882) wrote these words (which certainly would not be approved by every Catholic theologian): "Infallibility is not a characteristic of the teaching body to the exclusion of the body of the faithful, except as something loaned, derived, and indirect; in a sense it may be said that infallibility belongs to the body of the faithful just as directly as it does to the teaching body" (volume I, par. 13, n. 181). However, Catholic ecclesiology distinguishes clearly between "power to expound the revelation authentically" (reserved to the hierarchy) and various forms of doctrinal teaching which are the prerogative and the duty of the laity, such as scientific teaching, publicity, exhortation, counsel, and many other doctrinal tasks of the apostolic spirit.

In fact, in the world of Catholicism the laity have always carried on a perfectly doctrinal activity. We need not go back into the past to find an illustration of this; we need only recall the thousands of catechists, both in places where there is a hierarchy of clergy and in the mission field, who are really the direct source of instruction in the essentials of God's revelation. But, as far as I know, there is not very much written on this subject. I have already mentioned Father Congar's important chapter. Interesting considerations of a general nature will be found in the book by G. Philips, also mentioned above. On the laity in the New Testament see, for example, A. M. Dubarle, "Prophétisme et apostolat

des laïcs dans le Nouveau Testament" (in *La vie spirituelle*, April 1948, pp. 413-427). More especially concerning the prophetic rôle of the laity in his community, see J. Guitton, "Le laïc peut-il être prophète dans sa communauté?" (in *La vie spirituelle*, supplement, February 1952, pp. 66-73). Moreover, there are a number of important books on the sacrament of Confirmation, as a sacramental consecration for the defence of Christian truth; they represent a whole sector of Catholic thought on the rôle of the laity in defending doctrine, which is not at all well known, even in Catholic circles. In this connection the reader is referred to all the doctrinal commentaries on the sacrament of confirmation such as *Le mystère du Christ* by Ch. Hérès (Paris, Edition des Jeunes). Lastly, an important amount of literature is devoted to one enormous field of lay activity, namely lay mission-work. These lay mission-workers are a very special form of "teaching laity." See, for example, the articles on "the missionary laity" which appeared in 1951-1952 in "Neue Zeitschrift für Missionswissenschaft." Finally I would point out that in Spain *Documentos* No. 13-14 (San Sebastian, 1953, 182 pp.) is entirely devoted to the question of the laity; it is entitled *La misión de los seglares en la Iglesia*. This special number contains articles from many different countries, and is very instructive.

Have the laity anything to say in *the government of the Church*? The laity have a voice in the church elections and in the Councils; but their participation has become very indirect or else merely a matter of ceremony, so that on the whole they hardly feel that they have any say in the government of the Church. Indeed, if one accepts the idea of a hierarchical Church, it is normal that it should be governed by that hierarchy. But outside what is strictly governmental there are so many ways in which the influence of the laity could be of value: through information, advice, suggestions which are not merely theoretical but which really lead to important decisions on the part of the authorities. However, the laity is being appealed to more and more, even on the very delicate question of church government. I will only give one example. The name of Father Lombardi may be familiar; he has recently travelled all over the world speaking and preaching in favour of "a new world." This Jesuit, who is very highly esteemed in Roman Catholic circles, has published a book entitled *Per un mundo novo* (Rome, Edit. Civiltà cattolica, 1951) in which he suggests certain reforms which would be of interest for the future of Catholicism, including the development of the position of the laity in regard to the authorities of the Church. He envisages a "Senato laico dell'Umanità," a sort of body representing the laity all over the world, which would be attached to the papacy. On the national plane he suggests a "Consulta nazionale," a sort of lay Council attached to the national Episcopacy. And on the diocesan plane there would be a "Consulta diocesana" consisting both of priests and laymen, who would supervise the spheres closer to secular activity such as modern technical methods of evangelism, public morality, and questions of social help and education.

There is not very much Roman Catholic theological material written about the participation of the laity in church government. *Jalons pour une théologie du laïc* contains a good chapter (see pp. 314-365). There are also quite a few articles describing the rôle played by the laity or by the princes in the life of the church at certain times and in certain places, for instance *Ipotesi giuridici del Laicato nella Chiesa primitiva* (Milan, 1948) by P. G. Caron, or "Activité de quelques laïcs dans le gouvernement de l'Eglise au moment du Concile de Trente" by A. Duval (in *La vie spirituelle*, Supplement, November 15th, 1949, pp. 356-360).

The articles in the Dictionaries which relate the history of the papal or episcopal elections also prove incontestably the part played by the laity in many cases.

It is an undeniable fact that in the *apostolate of the Catholic Church* the laity play an important part. The repeated appeals of the church authorities are clear, insistent and sincere. Baptism and confirmation are regarded as the sacramental bases for this responsibility which is incumbent upon every church-member, namely to do his part in the Church's work of redemption and in its worship. The most characteristic aspect of this work is what has been called during the last few decades Catholic Action. The official documents have defined it as "participation in the apostolic hierarchy" (at the time of Pius XI) or "collaboration in the apostolic hierarchy" (at the time of Pius XII). This last expression is intentionally less strong than the first, because the idea of "lay participation" might lead people to think that the laity were being inserted into the sphere reserved for the hierarchy. On the other hand it mentioned a "mandate" given to the laity by the hierarchy, and there has been much discussion about the scope and the theological significance of this "mandate." In short, there is a general appeal to the lay apostolate, both in order to get in touch more effectively with the secular and professional world, and as a means of compensating for the inadequate number of clergy, and also simply as a means of making use of the basic, sacramental requirements of the status of Christians who have been baptised and confirmed.

In the book by Father Congar mentioned above, there is a chapter on "Les laïcs et la fonction apostolique de l'Eglise" (op. cit. pp. 488-558). Other books on the subject are: *La missione dei laici* by R. M. Spiazzi (Rome, 1951); *La Mission des laïcs dans l'Eglise* by J. Caryl and V. Portier (Lyons, 1949); *L'Action catholique. Essai de justification historique et de précision doctrinale* by H. Carpay (Paris-Tournai, 1948); and *L'Apostolat laïque* by Father Dabin (Paris, Bloud et Gay, 1931). During the last twenty-five years an enormous amount has been written about the Catholic Action movements, in the different countries, which have also published a number of periodicals on the subject.

The "promotion" of the laity in the Church also includes a *spiritual aspect*. Not only does the layman take part in the work of the Church; he also follows in the steps of the Christian saints. In every age there have doubtless been lay saints, and their memory is being revived today. At the time of the Renaissance also there were doubtless many "Introductions to the Devout Life." And this devout life was simply what is called today "perfection." But at the present time special stress is laid upon the doctrine of perfection "in" the world, and even to a certain extent "through" the world. *In the world* means the complete rejection of the old idea, that in order to become holy one must "retire from" this world, or at least regard it as of no account. *Through the world* means that the temporal conditions in which the layman works may prove a means of rising up to God, mortifying himself, and living the life of Christian charity which is the very heart of all Christian perfection. The "spirituality" of the laity therefore does not consist in defending an "easy" or "lower" form of saintliness, nor in taking as its model a sort of "clumsy sketch" of the monastic life. It consists rather in recalling the first essential principle—Christian love toward God and man—and in showing that this life of love can be lived in and through their ordinary secular occupations.

For a general idea and basic information on a spirituality of the laity see Father Congar's book quoted above, pp. 559-635. The Dominican review for February 1946 entitled *La vie spirituelle* published the results of an interesting

enquiry in an article: "Vers quel type de sainteté allons-nous?" From this, owing to numerous quotations, one perceives the stress on the "temporal" aspect of saintliness and even a certain bias towards activism which is harmful to a deep theological life. H. Urs von Balthasar, notably in *Der Laie und der Ordensstand* (Einsiedeln 1948), is a typical example of the tendency to take the idea of Christian "perfection" out of its religious and monastic setting.

The theme of the "spirituality" of the laity has inspired a whole series of studies, all of which aim at showing the Christian significance of the secular values which determine the life of the layman. There is a great deal of literature, some of it excellent, about marriage and the sanctification of married love, and a number of groups who give guidance to young married couples. This is another aspect of the new process of restoring the value of the idea of "vocation" in the general sense and with its secular connotation. These books bring out the real Christian significance of life in this world and of secular activities: the Christian meaning of one's profession, the Christian meaning of work, the Christian meaning of social life, in short, what is called a "theology of earthly realities." It would fill a whole number of *Laymen's Work* simply to give a list of the books on this subject. Moreover, in order to show that the state of perfection is not necessarily restricted to monks and nuns, a new and specifically lay "state of perfection" has been approved for Christians who remain in the world and live just like other people, while observing poverty and celibacy. In the Church this represents a new "state of perfection" for Christians who are not members of any religious order; from the point of view of sanctification "in the world" this fact is extremely significant. The basic document for this new "state of perfection" is the Constitution *Provida Mater* (see *La Documentation catholique*, June 11th 1947, p. 577 and August 29th, c. 1089).

On the question of the spirituality of marriage see the review *L'Anneau d'or* (Paris). On the idea of "vocation" see *Die Wertung der weltlichen Berufe im Mittelalter* by N. Paulus in *Histor. Jahrbuch*, 1911, pp. 725-755; also "Remarques sur la Conception catholique de la Vocation" by Y. de Montcheuil in *Problèmes de vie spirituelle* (Paris, 1946, pp. 75-94). On the idea of profession see *Le Travail* by J. Haessle (Paris, 1933, pp. 153-205), and *Die weltlichen Berufe als religiössittliche Idee* by F. Deininger. On work see the book by J. Haessle (mentioned above), also *Spiritualité du Travail* by M. D. Chenu (Liège, Pensée catholique), and numerous recent studies. On the cosmos see *Consécration: Le christianisme et l'Activité humaine* by E. Rideau (Paris, 1945). On technic see *Der Geist der Technik und das Evangelium* by O. Bangerter (Heidelberg, 1939), *Der Mensch im Zeitalter der Technik* by F. Muckermann (Lucerne, 1943), and *Progrès technique et progrès moral*, a symposium published by the *Rencontres internationales de Genève* in 1947. On earthly reality in general see *Théologie des réalités terrestres* by G. Thils (Desclée, 1946), and *Théologie de l'histoire* also by G. Thils (Desclée, 1950), also *Théologie et réalité sociale* (Casterman, 1953). With regard to the many "Secular Rules," a list of these will be found in *Documentation catholique* (Paris, January 24th, 1954, pp. 75-116 with an introduction referring to the papal documents relative to these "Institutes" and explaining their real "lay" significance.

From these brief notes it is clear that Catholic thought today, and indeed the thought of Christendom as a whole, is focused strongly upon the question of the "laity." It is a providential sign and the proof of a renewal of youth and dynamic power in the Church of Our Lord.

ROUND TABLE TALKS

On the following pages we reproduce an exchange of information as it took place on two evenings during the recent conference of leaders of laymen's institutes and groups. Not every country was represented there, let alone every important group or institute. All the speakers pointed out that they did not wish to give a survey of the whole situation of Laymen's Work in their countries. They rather reported from their personal point of view and their immediate experience in a very informal way. It is in this sense that these reports should be understood. In some cases, certain points are added to what the speakers actually said in their presentation from the discussion which followed every report. We further add to these talks a few reports received in written form which match well with the atmosphere of informal exchange which was a distinct feature of the conference.

Members of the conference who reported were Pastor A. Siirala from Finland ; Professor J. Ellul from France ; Dr. Eberhard Müller, Dr. Müller-Schwefe and Professor H. Thielicke from Germany ; Mr. John Lawrence from Great Britain ; Dr. Pop from the Netherlands ; Director O. Hartman from Sweden ; Dr. Rinderknecht and Pasteur J. de Senarclens from Switzerland ; and the Rev. F. Ayres from the United States of America.

FINLAND

During the past fifty years two major groups have become more and more estranged from the Church of Finland (95 % of the population belong to the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland) — workers and intellectuals. From the point of view of evangelisation the problem has usually been seen in this perspective : how can the church reach secularised men ? The following anecdote may illustrate this fact. A pastor went to one of the pietistic mass gatherings and asked a preacher there : "How impressive ! How do you manage to attract all these secularised men and women ?" and the preacher replied "We are ourselves secularised." This shows how the question is put the wrong way. Starting from the church's recognition of its guilt, a new search for the message for our generation has begun in order to be able to receive anew the Word and the forgiveness of sins.

Against this background and with this new orientation the **Parishional Institute of the Finnish Church** was founded in 1945. It lies in Järvenpää, 35 km. north of Helsinki. This realisation was only possible thanks to the generous help of the American Lutheran Churches, which gave the funds for the setting up of the main building. Otherwise the whole project would have remained a dream, since Finland at that time was wholly taken up with the problem of resettling 500 000 refugees and paying off the war debts to Russia. Once it had been established in 1949 the Institute managed to maintain itself without foreign aid and at present it has doubled its size. It can accommodate up to 150 persons.

The School of the Institute, properly speaking, consists of three sections. (1) The first one holds two consecutive courses of a *folk high school* character (there are 85 folk high schools attended by 5000 persons in Finland of which 40 are Christian establishments). (2) The second section trains full-time *youth leaders* for their future work in the parishes. This training takes two years for which a

certain standard of education is required. (3) The third section holds courses for *social workers*, *parish workers* and *deacons*. Young people are admitted to it only after having already served in the parishes for some time. This would also apply to those who have first undergone a training for youth leaders.

The following figures give an idea of the Institute's activities: there are at present 107 students and 12 teachers giving some 35 lectures every day.

Part of the training of "*cantors*" has been entrusted to the Parishional Institute which concerns itself with the religious aspects of their future position, whilst the musical instruction is given to them by the Sibelius Academy. A Centre for the training of *Sunday school teachers* is also attached to the Institute. During the summer *weekend meetings* and *conferences* with lectures are organised at which people from various walks of life and different occupations and professions discuss their problems.

With the help of the School Board of Finland the Institute will also include a *Research Centre for Adult Education*. The Institute does not believe in a universal solution to educational problems, but as other institutions in the country — whether under church auspices or not — its members are aware of their situation as learners.

As to the work of the Institute in general, *ecumenical* contacts are vital for its growth and expansion. It is hoped that despite the language barrier these contacts can be developed.

FRANCE

The French laymen's movements are characterised by a very great number of groups gathering a very small number of persons (a typical feature of French Protestantism !).

I. The *Associations professionnelles protestantes* aim at bringing together people of the same profession or occupation. There are groups of doctors, professors, teachers, business men, engineers and social workers. Despite various efforts Protestant nurses and lawyers have never formed groups. The aims in these individual groups are to train the laity and to forge a link with non-Christians, which depends largely on personal contact. Admittedly the two aims are quite different from each other, and it is therefore understandable that they work as study groups and as professional or occupational groups. Study groups with a restricted number of members meet more frequently, whilst the professional groups tend to be larger and meet perhaps only three times a year.

The method of work is that of "confrontation," e.g. if the theme under discussion is wages or insurance, a thorough study of all that the Bible and theology have to say on the subject is first undertaken. Afterwards, the actual situation, with its economic, social and other factors, is examined. The two findings are then brought into "confrontation" and care is taken not to gloss over differences. Generally the members of the groups find their spiritual life deepened; they also try to carry out in practice the conclusions they have come to. Thus the A.P.P. are of great influence and importance both in the field of studies and in the personal experience of their members.

II. The *Christianisme social* movement does not concentrate on studies, but takes the form of "action groups." It has contacts with the socialist parties. Its

members, some of whom are influential personalities, have often been successful in stirring up interest in great social problems such as alcoholism, housing and prostitution. At present the movement is going through a crisis, as it does not know where its sympathies lie.

III. Another movement to be mentioned is that of the **Chrétien progressistes**. Its aim is to encounter men and women where they stand and it is thus gaining importance in the industrial world. The members of this movement play an active part in trade unions and in the more or less communist peace movements. Its danger lies in the fact that the members are untrained. For the most part they are recruited from people who have been disappointed by the Church or who have not wanted to know anything of the Church for ten or twenty years, and who suddenly find that they are ready to be Christians, but not to belong to a church. They do not care for theology, nor for the Bible, they just insist on being "Christians" together with the workers. They proclaim themselves Christians vis-à-vis of non-Christians. The movement is gaining ground and contains an equal proportion of Catholics and Protestants.

IV. A very interesting new venture is to be carried out in the coming summer. For many years an itinerant preacher, Pastor André de Robert, has visited together with two or three lay companions remote villages where in many places not even a church exists. There the small group spend the first two or three days doing odd jobs such as mending clocks and wireless sets — all without charge. And then they give talks — and very often leave behind them a nucleus of converts. This itinerant pastor has trained quite a number of lay people for this special ministry. But it is essential that the work should be followed up in some way. Pastor de Robert has launched an appeal to other Protestants to support this cause which has been given the name of **active peace service** (*service actif de la paix*) as opposed to war service. After all, members of a nation give up one or two years of their life to the army, they pay heavy taxes for armaments — and all the time they say: "The Church has nothing for us to do." If such a "peace service" could be introduced, the lay forces of the Church would find in it a wonderful outlet. It would also be a good opportunity to engage former members of Christian youth and student organisations, who when they have passed a certain age are simply left unemployed in the Church. Thus the A.P.P., the itinerant group, Cimade (an interdenominational team) and Taizé (a lay order for men in the Reformed Church) are joining forces to develop this idea of mobilising the laity. It is planned that unmarried people give one entire year of service to this action. For others a month's training on sociological and theological lines could be followed, after a year's interval, by one month of practical work. They might either carry out follow-up work in groups of seven and eight (including families) in one of the villages visited by the itinerant group, or they could be put at the disposal of a parish for shock action, visiting and making contacts.

The official churches give warm approval to these projects, but are unable to provide funds. Hence it is important to arouse interest among the laity for this plan. A home has been providentially offered to this group at Villemétrie near Senlis and preparations are already being made to equip this centre for an initial number of thirty-five members. The date for the opening is set for September 1954, and the resident staff will consist of some brethren of Taizé together with Pastor de Robert; those responsible for the courses will be Jean Bosc, B. Charbonneau, Jacques Ellul and Jean Gastambide.

GERMANY

The Evangelical Academies in Germany were started after the second world war. Today there are twelve in the West (Bad Boll, Berlin, Hamburg, Hemer, Herrenalb, Hesse-Nassau, Hofgeismar, Loccum, Mülheim, Pfalz, Schleswig-Holstein, Tutzing) and four in the East (Berlin-Brandenburg, Mecklenburg, Meissen, Sachsen-Anhalt). They differ very greatly from each other. It is through their separate activities that the work of each has gradually assumed its distinctive form, although their work and methods are ultimately the same in that only questions of principle are dealt with, and not technical details, and that the method is that of discussion rather than instruction. In former lay movements the central question has often been : What must I do to be saved ? Nowadays problems of the individual, even of such importance, are no longer the main concern. Questions asked at present are, e.g. What is a just wage ? What does a doctor do when he uses an anaesthetic ? This is the point from which a discussion starts. Every such question has a spiritual dimension which must be shown and indeed entered into. At the end of this road the individual is confronted with a decision.

At the beginning the Academy met with many criticisms. It had no message to pass on, and the Church was unable to help it answer the questions raised in its discussions. But gradually the conviction has grown that the answers can only be found in common, they must be worked out between them. The answer must be given by the two together and therefore one cannot say that the role of the Academy is either "active" or "passive" — it is cooperative. The preparations for conferences have to be carried out very carefully. E.g. when preparing a conference of doctors the method is to invite good physicians and medical experts, even if they are non-Christians, to a small meeting in appropriate surroundings where the problems of their work are discussed. The Academy obtains the names of such persons from secular agencies.

Four types of *meeting* have gradually been established :

(1) *Professional and occupational conferences* in which a profession or occupation and its problems are the theme of the meeting (doctors, workers, miners, lawyers, educationalists, etc.).

(2) *Conferences on particular problems* such as Fear, The Overcoming of Nationalism, Marriage, Modern Art, etc.

(3) It is not always good and advisable to have speakers. Some meetings simply start with one or two questions which are then taken up by the participants. They are in the form of *seminars* (Tutzing) or, following certain group methods, *training courses*.

(4) 80 % of the participants would prefer *meditation* to thinking, discussion and academic debates. They want to experience fellowship, to be given friendly guidance and to receive pastoral care. This leads them right into practical questions, and they do not remain in an arid consideration of "ethical problems."

Besides these regular meetings of the Academies, a special association of great significance ought to be mentioned : the **Study Fellowship of the Evangelical Academies** (*Studiengemeinschaft der Evangelischen Akademien*) which carries out an activity of inter-faculty research and study work within the orbit of the Church. The members of this group meet annually and discuss a subject chosen from one

of the fields of academic study or public life, e.g. "Medicine and Anthropology," "Christians, non-Christians and the Law." Although only one subject is dealt with, the members of other faculties attend the meeting. This fellowship also has several study groups, one e.g. on the problem of Marxism which has just published its findings. Another of the functions of this fellowship is the editing of relevant books and symposia.

Meetings are lost if there is no *follow up*. It is essential to accompany conference members back into their parishes, their professions and occupations. Thus the Evangelical Academies must go out to the people.

House circles (*Hauskreise*) gather regularly, sometimes fortnightly, sometimes monthly. They are made up of fifteen or more persons, according to the local situation. People on the fringe of the Church or even outside it can be drawn into these circles. The principle is the realisation that individuals find it more difficult to grow into a community of "finished" Christians than into such small flexible groups. Such circles are therefore of missionary significance.

Groupings on an occupational basis (*Berufsgliederungen*). Thus e.g. unions and groups have joined together in the work of the *Evangelical Action Fellowship for Labour Problems* (Evangelische Aktionsgemeinschaft für Arbeiterfragen). Their aim is the forming of Christian nuclei. The starting point here is the awareness that man is no longer an individual, he is "part" of a collective unit. If he is therefore made responsible for his "part", this will help him to become an individual. It is difficult to act individually as a Christian; if several can join together, they can influence a whole situation. Here the mathematical $1 = 1$ and $10 = 10$ no longer holds good, since it has been proved in these circumstances that $1 = 0$ and $10 = 100$. The question therefore is how to get the ten together. The individual believer cannot act alone, and the way taken by the trade unions, that of exclusiveness, must also be avoided. Groups set apart block the missionary effort. Factory cells are, however, a natural response to the situation in a factory.

In Eastern Germany a **service of lay visitors** has been set up by the Evangelical Academies. Lay men and women take the responsibility for visiting the members of a whole parish in their homes, distributing books, giving pastoral care, etc. This movement has recently adopted new emphases. The "visitor" is no longer alone but accompanied by a pastor. To this work which has the form of stewardship laymen give one entire week each year; it has thus become a regular office in the church.

GREAT BRITAIN

The British Council of Churches has recently drawn up a survey on the position of the laity and thus expressed its concern for this problem. This report starts with the responsibility of the laity in public worship; then it goes on to deal with the responsibility for Christian service and witness, both within the organised churches and towards the outside world, undertaken by such church societies as the Church of England Men's Society, the Baptist Men's Movement, the Mothers' Union, the Methodist Women's Fellowship. Finally it examines interdenominational agencies, which include such well known organisations as the Christian Endeavour, the Adult School Council, and Toc H.

In general, much work is being done, although it cannot always be identified with activities of specific groups and movements. Thus e.g. the Army does a great

deal of frontier work, and the influence of the BBC (British Broadcasting Corporation) in religious matters is considerable. The Sunday newspaper, *The Observer*, has a largely Christian staff and in an unspectacular way puts forward many Christian concerns and discusses the problems of our day from a Christian standpoint.

A movement of importance is the **Overseas Missionary Movement**, which has many lay forces behind it. For example the Church Missionary Society of the Church of England has so-called "action groups" which try to arouse interest in problems not obviously connected with the missionary concern.

Most of the work of the **Christian Frontier** is, at this stage, being done by groups of specialists. Thus the psychotherapists are preparing a book; educationalists are engaged in a promising study on the problem of secondary schools; the doctors' group has done some very useful work, drawing attention to the necessity of medical ethics — as opposed to medical etiquette — being taught to young doctors. A group on African questions has recently been set up which is considering the effects of the activities of the missionary societies, in particular in East Africa, where the results of pietistic mission work unrelated to real life are posing serious problems. The organ of the Christian Frontier is now the *Christian News Letter* edited by John Lawrence (formerly called *The Christian Frontier*). Unfortunately it is true that the activities of the Christian Frontier do not reach far beyond the London area.

Apart from the Christian Frontier particular mention should be made of some **Y.M.C.A. Colleges**. Here various problems are studied such as the relation between industry and the Church. A new venture is the recently founded Dunford College, under the leadership of Dr. J. H. Oldham, which takes special interest in African students.

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The Iona Community (taken from an excellent article written by M. Jean L. Baumgartner which appeared in *Réforme* of 24 April, 1954). It happened in a train in Scotland. An ardent evangelist turned to the traveller sitting opposite and asked him, "Are you a Christian?" "Yes," replied the traveller. "And what do you do as a Christian?" "I'm a baker," was the reply. "Yes, of course, that's your job," corrected the evangelist, "but what do you do in your quality as a Christian?" Although the traveller was a teacher in a Sunday School and shared enthusiastically in all the evangelistic efforts arranged by his church, he refused to mention all the responsibilities he had taken on within the church and simply repeated "I'm a baker!"

That is a story which George McLeod, the founder of the Iona Community, likes to tell, because it illustrates the division in most people's minds between the temporal and the spiritual. Is it not a fact that many people think that being a Christian consists primarily in being a member of this or that "parish activity" and faithfully attending all the meetings announced from the pulpit or in the parish magazine?

In Dr. McLeod's opinion, what is needed today is a Church which interests itself in man within the setting of his daily work, instead of concentrating upon the problems of his soul and ignoring all the rest of his life. The members of the church must emerge from the precincts of "the Cathedral" and share in all the aspirations and needs of their fellow-men. As Dr. McLeod says, they must learn

to be human before they can hope some day to be divine. An Anglican clergyman has expressed the same thought : "It is a great mistake to suppose that God is only interested in religion and the Church, or that the Creator is concerned only with what goes on in the churches."

These were the ideas which led to the founding of the Iona Community in 1938. George McLeod had then been minister of a church for four years. He gave up his church and decided to found a community, together with two other pastors and one layman, on the Island of Iona in the Hebrides. This island is of primary importance in the history of the Church, for it was there that Saint Columba and his monks lived in the 6th century, and from it they brought Christianity to Scotland and Northern England. In 1203 an abbey was built on the original site of Saint Columba's monastery. This abbey was restored at the beginning of the 20th century, and belongs to the Church of Scotland, under the control of a "trust." In 1938 the care of the abbey was handed over to the Iona Community and since then it has been used for retreats and as a place for trying out the principles of the Community. The Iona Community centre is only open three months a year, from July till the end of September. During these summer months the members can come to Iona to take part in retreats, conferences and manual work, and these activities are also open to anyone who is interested in the principles of the Community. It is therefore not a resident community. New members have to go through a two-year period of training as "novices" in close collaboration with one of the members. They are bound by a Rule, which imposes a spiritual discipline upon them. This Rule calls upon every member to devote one-tenth of his income to the life of the Church, and the general opinion of the Community (although there is no written prescription) invites every member to take part in the political life of the country by joining the political party of his choice.

"Instead of imagining that our hands are cleaner than those of the men responsible for the political organisation of the world," writes George McLeod, "we should rather feel called to assist them in 'cleaning up the game.' But if we are no better than they are, and if we persist in criticising and condemning their efforts, we should be careful, remembering what the Bible says about those who *judge*."

This whole trend of ideas, which affects the spiritual life, the liturgy, and the Church's action within contemporary society, soon aroused deep interest among the Presbyterians in Scotland. In 1951 the National Synod finally recognised the Community as an integral part of the Scottish Church.

Ever since 1943 the interest in the Community has been growing, and many associations of men and women have been formed which share in the work and aims of the Community, and try to carry out its principles. Today there is an association for pastors who share the convictions of the Community and accept its discipline, without being full members. There are nearly 200 of them. There are also groups of women, laymen, workers and young people. These associated groups form an important bridge between the country and the Community, by enabling it to extend its influence more and more. These groups are now at work in most of the towns in Scotland, and in Glasgow there is a first-class training-centre.

During the summer months on Iona the work of restoring the old monastery attached to the abbey goes on day after day. The trained building-workers are assisted by pastors, doctors, teachers and students. Dr. McLeod is sure that these opportunities for contact are more instructive than listening to long dis-

courses at a conference or taking part in discussions. He is convinced that many intellectuals talk about the dignity of work, while they are afraid to make their hands dirty. They have everything to learn during these hours spent in overalls on the buildings of Iona.

The close link between work and prayer is symbolised by the morning service. It does not close with the Blessing, but with a hymn of praise and an act of worship. It is the evening service that closes with the Blessing, so that "the day's work comes in between the first and second half of one complete act of worship." In this way the work itself can become a means of glorifying God.

NETHERLANDS

The Institute **Kerk en Wereld** (see bulletins Nos. 2, 3, 4 and 6) is a church foundation set up in 1945 in Driebergen. The leading principle of the whole work is the apostolic vocation of the Church "to testify to God's promises and commandments to all people and powers in the expectation of God's Kingdom" (art. VIII of the *Church Order* of the Dutch Reformed Church). Its aim is thus twofold: (1) to bring to the knowledge of Christ and the community of the Church those who are estranged from the Church (evangelisation), and (2) to penetrate society with the conviction of the necessity to order life according to God's promises and commandments (christianisation). The activities of the Institute are carried out in accordance with the rules laid down in the *Church Order*; but at the same time the Institute is free to develop its own initiatives. The Church recognises the importance of youth leaders, social workers and evangelists by giving them an ecclesiastical status with special functions. The means of work are the following:

a) The training and continued guidance of youth workers, social workers, personnel managers and others who are to assume leadership in a given sphere. Students are admitted after careful examination, and their training takes three years, two of which are spent at the Institute whilst the last year takes the form of practical work. The subjects taught are divided into the following main groups: theology, social sciences, psychology, cultural subjects, practical subjects. After the final exams these trained workers make a promise before the chairman of the General Synod. By this they pledge themselves to follow the advice of the board of directors in choosing their work, whether in the Church or in a secular organisation. At present 90 trained people are at work and there are more than 40 students. This training is recognised by the government as a "school for social work," and granted a state subsidy.

b) Conferences for people of different professions so that they may discuss the problems of the re-integration of everyday life. (In 1953 there were 2600 participants in these conferences).

c) Courses for members of professions in which the problem of human relations is particularly urgent (cf. bulletin No. 6, course for personnel managers, p. 44). During a period of seven months participants come together six times for one week.

d) A course in "apostolic education" is given to church members. The participants meet for five weekends and for a full week in two successive years. The subjects include the message of the Bible, the content of the faith, the Church in the world, the fellow-man, etc. Contact between participants and the Institute

is maintained after the course, when they perform their apostolic service in their professions and in their spare time, in consultation with the church council of their parish.

e) Contacts with persons and organisations (national and regional) in industry and trade unions. There is growing contact with industrialists and trade union leaders. Special attention is given to the problems arising in formerly rural areas which are in process of industrialisation and for which new forms of society must be worked out. The Sociological Institute of the Dutch Reformed Church renders many services in the way of investigation and information.

f) Contacts with persons and organisations in rural districts. A new director was appointed in 1953 whose special task is the development of social and cultural work in country areas. This branch of the Kerk en Wereld activities is still very young, but it is clear that an effort must be made to avoid adding to the so-called "lost groups" of intellectuals and labourers that of farmers.

g) Organisation and stimulation of local evangelistic work. Each church council has the responsibility of taking its own initiative to promote apostolic work in its parish. Kerk en Wereld gives information in this field, and in cases where no activities along these lines exist it tries to awaken the sense of responsibility for this task. The Institute considers critically all kinds of methods and supplies material. This "Open Door" activity is gaining ground in more and more parishes. It issues a fortnightly periodical which is distributed among the unchurched by church members personally, and thus creates contacts of the greatest value. The "Open Door" movement includes various activities such as the training of people for its work, the conducting of special services for the unchurched, the planning of cheap holidays and the organisation of meetings.

Oud Poelgeest in Oegstgeest is an independent institute. Its activities cover a wide range (housewives, farmers, flood victims, youth, artistic efforts). In its work it gives special attention to the problem of the unification of Europe. The director of the Institute is Dr. A. W. Kist.

Another institute which is not a church foundation is the **Arbeiders Gemeenschap Bentveld**, whose director is Dr. A. van Biemen. It was set up by a group of Christian socialists, but is independent of political parties. It has personal contacts with the trade unions, the labour party and the government. Special emphasis is laid on the possibility of relating the message of Jesus Christ to social and political life. Conferences gather up to 60 or 100 participants of which the majority live outside the Church. The Institute tries to attract groups of young industrial workers. Very often "humanists" who would never accept an invitation to a conference held by one of the church institutes will attend meetings at Bentveld.

There are a number of growing contacts between the Church and the trade unions. In Holland there exist four trade unions: the Christian, the Roman Catholic, the socialist and the communist trade unions. There is active cooperation in employment questions, although this cooperation is not systematic.

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The Economist in the Netherlands (written by Mr. Anema at our request). Economists' conferences have been held for some years by the Kerk en Wereld Institute, taking as their starting-point the contention of Karl Mannerheim

that society is passing through a period of transition from *laissez-faire* to planning, i.e. of complete structural alteration. This structural alteration can take the form of socialisation, of planned economy, of the organisation of industry by law, or of various other arrangements or systems. Such a fundamental transformation confronts Christian economists with certain very concrete questions, some of which have been discussed at the six economists' conferences which have been held.

In general it may be stated that Christian economists in Holland are only at the beginning of their study of the relation between economics on the one hand and philosophy and ideology on the other. This question was discussed at the first economists' conference, dealing with the problem of economic order. Economic order can, it was held, be considered one of the most important elements in economics as a whole, and one in which philosophy and ideology also have their part to play.

From what point of view do we in general, as Christians, pick on the particular economic order we regard as desirable? In considering this, we must penetrate to the ultimate logical conclusions, the "ultimate values" which are or are not realised in a given economic order. As Christian economists we are bound, if we wish to arrive at the desired economic order, to introduce a certain scale of priorities among such "ultimate values." Economics (including economic theory, order and policy) is far from being entirely unconnected with ethical values; on the contrary, it is full of them, and the economist is under obligation to stress them.

Taking this evaluation of economics as a basis, the organisers of the conferences raised for discussion certain subjects of urgent topical concern.

It is a common-place that mutual polemics dissipate a great deal of the vital strength generated by the Reformers. This is at the present time more unfortunate than ever. While we may recognise that even among Christians there may be progressive and conservative types, and that the individual's practical insights are to a great extent conditioned by his walk of life, we must none the less make every effort to arrive, in our examination of the question whether the ultimate values can function freely in a given economic order, at greater unanimity than is at present usually the case.

There are certain things which quite obviously conflict with Christian love of one's neighbour. An economic order ought to serve a Christian society. At the second economists' conference there was a discussion on one of the central points in economic organisation, property. The problem was, however, approached from one distinct angle, that of property in its relation to the distribution of income. First of all the Biblical data on the subject were listed, and then the present situation in regard to property and distribution estimated, in the light of urgent topical questions such as industrialisation, the rise in population, capital and the balance of payments. What view should we take of the "staggering" of property, sharing of profits, co-ownership, the work of the government commission on staggered property? Should the law on partnership be modified to give the worker a definite position in the company alongside the manager and the shareholder (*cf.* introduction of workers' co-responsibility scheme)? Again, the question was discussed whether the new method of limiting possession of the means of production in pursuit of particular aims was a commendable one, and in what relation it stood to the socialisation of such ownership of the

means of production. It was clearly established that the New Testament stresses the personal responsibility of each individual for his own actions in respect of his neighbour. In so doing, it accepts the principle of private property, but deprecates unsound stewardship. A social pattern not based on private ownership is not necessarily un-Christian. The conference agreed, in regard to the question of the distribution of income, that the State is justified in concerning itself with this matter.

"Welfare Standards in the Netherlands" was the subject of a later conference. The damage sustained by Holland in the second world war was enormous; in both industry and transport devastation was widespread. Holland lost 28.9 % of her national wealth, and the national income dropped sharply. Directly the war was over improvement set in, but not long after that there came changes. The employers wanted a favourable climate—lowered taxation and greater liberty. Of the workers, on the other hand, sacrifices were demanded: the stress was on the general interest, the balance of payments must be kept ticking, and this was impossible without a limitation of working-class consumption. It was chiefly a fact-finding conference, but one speaker also brought up for discussion the principle of the Responsible Society mooted at the World Council of Churches Assembly in Amsterdam. Little concrete effect could, however, be accorded to this principle.

The fifth conference dealt with "Man and his Work." The nineteenth-century economist concerned himself with an abstract entity he called *homo economicus*. This picture has since been wholly transformed. We deal with the "complete man." The nineteenth century regarded the motive force as being economic, a presupposition which quite often did function as reality. More recently, moral motives were once more given their place. The social expert works in a field where side by side with man work is being rediscovered. Although notable progress has been made, there are still lacunae as a result of, firstly, the incorrect attitude of the teaching staff in the schools; secondly, the attraction of the "white-collar occupation"; thirdly, the survival of the nineteenth-century over-prizing of intellect. The significance of manual labour must be reconsidered.

One conference discussed the problem of taxation. Very fundamental questions were raised, such as the extent of the State's responsibility and the problems of property. Here too, however, discussion was limited to the stating of the problems confronting Christians in social affairs.

The conclusion to be drawn from these conferences as a whole must thus be that Christian economists are facing up to the problems of the day, but that the evaluation, from an economic standpoint, of economic organisational patterns in relation to the Christian values is an extremely difficult task which is still only in its infancy.

SWEDEN

The importance of lay movements is steadily growing in Sweden. The main tasks and aims of these movements may be summed up in four points:

- (1) Vocational guidance and raising of professional standards, e.g. there is a free church group of journalists which is exerting Christian influence on the press. It is also concerned about encouraging young Christians to choose journalism as a profession.

(2) Missionary action, carried out by Bible Societies and colporteurs.

(3) Examination of occupational problems from a Christian view point and bringing together people from the same profession on an ecumenical level, e.g. in associations of Christian Social Workers, of Christian Teachers, of Christian Doctors, in the Group of Christian Parliamentarians (representatives of all but the communist party meet once every month to discuss political problems in the light of the Christian faith).

(4) The reaching of grass-roots through lay groups.

One of the most important lay movements is the **Swedish Church Laymen's Association** (*Kyrkobröderna*). According to its regulations no pastor can become president. The initiative for its foundation was taken by the laymen themselves who are also responsible for the whole organisation. They discuss problems of occupational and professional life. This association is responsible for a great achievement: Sweden at one time was one of the countries with the least frequent communions. In one parish in which the *Kyrkobröderna* took up their work, within the space of twenty years the number of people who took communion each year increased from 40 to 2000. The Association is steadily growing and numbers now 18.000 members.

The **Sigtuna Foundation** (*Sigtunastiftelsen*) has four responsibilities: a humanist "gymnasium" (boarding school), a folk high school, a conference centre, and a guest house where up to 45 guests work, rest and pray. Thirty years ago the Foundation introduced "contact conferences," at which e.g. doctors met pastors. This kind of work has now largely been taken over by the diocesan houses. The task of the Foundation conferences is not so much to create contacts for the sake of contacts as to bring experts together in order to solve problems and contribute new facts to the common debate. Thus it was in a conference of experts meeting on the initiative of the Foundation that a sober discussion took place on the Kinsey report which had caused such a sensation in the public press. The Foundation does not fix its programmes in advance. Its attention is focused more and more on those outside the church, e.g. some time ago a conference of poets was held at which the president of the Atheist Association took part as one of the leaders. Communists also are invited when this is advisable. The practice of confession is growing at the centre, as is the emphasis on the place of corporate worship. A new venture in the work of the Foundation is its dramatic activity. Last summer a play was performed in which professional actors appeared together with lay extras on the scene. Further plays are going to be staged this year.

SWITZERLAND

Switzerland is faced with two handicaps in organising lay movements — the existence of twenty-two autonomous cantons, and the usual lack of funds!

Recently a new centre has been set up in the Canton of Shaffhouse at **Rüdlingen** for the holding of conferences for professional groups. Its work, however, has been impeded owing to the fact that it has not been able to secure a resident and permanent leadership. Plans have been put forward suggesting the setting up of a centre for **East Switzerland**.

Near Zürich, the **Reformierte Heimstätte** at **Boldern** has very good contacts with the churches and their authorities. Up to 60 % of the participants are recruited from the parishes. The "Besinnungstagen" (retreats) are a successful

feature of the Heimstätte. Even for the usual conferences no "famous" speakers are invited. The preparation for such meetings is done by a team which designates two or three persons to introduce the subject. The conferences are divided into groups of six to eight participants so as to ensure lively discussions. At present there are five special teams dealing with the preparation of conferences. These teams will also be responsible for the follow-up of the meetings.

Conferences for the following groups seem to meet the widest demands and have the greatest success: women in employment, engaged couples, widows, and marriage experts. An "Evangelisches Frauenbuch" is being prepared for publication. A new venture is the so-called "Väterschule". Educational problems are discussed at its meetings — which give an opportunity to attract unchurched sections of the population.

Work with the trade unions has also been taken up, especially with the very important Metal Workers and Watchmakers Trade Union. A group of four to five people tries to approach the influential persons in the unions. The reaction of active trade union members usually is: "What do you want from us?" Courses for workers have been arranged and it is the Church which pays their salaries during the period of the course to prevent any feeling on the side of the workers of their having been bribed by their employers. In this field proper follow-up work is indispensable. (There are three main trade unions in Switzerland, where 50 % of the workers are organised — the Roman Catholic, the Evangelical and the so-called Free Trade Union.) To illustrate the number of people reached through various experiments an example from the Valley of the Rhine can be mentioned: After a talk in a factory a request for morning meditations came in. These meditations on a biblical text in everyday language are now read by some 700 workers, most of whom are unchurched. There are three teams for industrial problems: employers and workers, employers and managers, employers and cost-accountants. The subjects which receive the greatest response in discussions are the responsibilities towards fellow-workers, trade unions and the factory. The responsibility towards the community is not discussed explicitly, but touched upon in connection with problems of democracy, totalitarian tendencies, etc.

In French-speaking Switzerland the main work on the lay issue is being done in the two **study centres** at Geneva and Lausanne (*Centres protestants d'études*).

The activities of the Geneva centre may be considered under three headings. (1) *Training the laity*. The first task is to see the problems in perspective. Thus the main emphasis is laid on courses of theology for the laity (Themes: The Word of God, What is Faith? etc.). (2) *Professional and occupational groups*. This work is carried out in several sections: Artists (in particular church architects); doctors (the problem of abortion — a study which has led to legislative action); politicians (in connection with the elections); philosophers (studies on moral philosophy); women (the work of this group has been particularly successful); educationalists (especially with regard to the setting up of a Protestant college in the West of Switzerland); and a group of young scientists (studying the psycho-analysis of faith). (3) *Problems concerning the church*. Under this heading are included enquiries as to the task of the church, the role of the laity, the implication of missions for ordinary church members, etc. The centre is also responsible for the translating and editing of Protestant literature in French.

The centre at Lausanne has only recently come into existence, and some important people are giving their time to it. (See Bulletin No. 6, p. 45).

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

There are three ways of looking at the problem of the laity in the United States : it can be regarded as the problem of

- (1) releasing the already existing lay forces ;
- (2) reviving the laymen in the churches who are either sleeping or paralysed ;
- (3) renewing the church through death and rebirth — which is really the fundamental task.

The first way of looking at the problem implies that these forces are ready to be released — this is not necessarily true. There is a great deal of lay activity in the States, and in particular the partisans of the “release” view are producing good programmes, making the church attractive in order to draw the people into them (ushers’ unions, etc.). The spectacular success of a revivalist like Billy Graham should not blind anyone to the fact that the Church is losing people all the time. It is interesting to hear e.g. that the Methodists have organised a visitation campaign : 10,000 people made some 45,000 visits and thereby won 6000 new members for the church. However, it is still true that out of every ten who are confirmed seven are sooner or later lost.

What is therefore needed is a renewal. A new kind of parish life must be born. Parish life in the 19th century mainly meant vested choirs, ladies’ guilds, and men’s bible classes. Now many parishes do not even have bible classes ; where these still exist they have often become stereotyped. Prayer groups are almost non-existent. The breaking of bread lacks all connection with daily life. The approach today must put its accent elsewhere.

In **Parishfield** (in a rural setting in the neighbourhood of Detroit) an attempt is being made to live out a new type of parish life. The resident group is composed of three families and one single woman. The pattern of the life there is based on Acts 2. Temporary members of the community learn to share, through discussion, the gifts which each has received. In emulation of the approach of the Evangelical Academies, efforts are made to organise meetings with industrialists, workers, journalists, etc. Parishfield is an independent venture, although the Protestant Episcopal Church has contributed largely to its foundation. Everybody, regardless of his or her church affiliation, is welcome there. The centre is in touch with the National Council of Churches regarding the organisation of some of its courses e.g. for industrialists. As to the follow-up, a certain amount is being done, but on the whole there are not yet enough people to give the necessary attention to this work.

Another lay institution in the USA is the one at **Kirkridge**. Here too, those responsible for the centre have realised that a renewal in the Church is needed. Thus some pastors and university people have got together and bought a farm with its adjoining buildings. This centre is open to seminary students and other groups who go there for retreat conferences. There is unfortunately no permanent staff as yet. The centre is based on a membership system. Participants for conferences are brought in through personal contacts. In this way some meetings for example of architects have already taken place.

SOME REFLECTIONS ON THE ECUMENICAL INSTITUTE

Hendrik Kraemer

In the sketch about the Ecumenical Institute which appeared in No. 6 of the Bulletin, the closing remark was that the resident staff of the Institute had remained unchanged. This is true also at the moment in which these lines are written. Yet, we have to add now that in regard to the composition of the resident staff we are looking forward towards great changes. The whole staff will resign at the Evanston Assembly. The Director, Dr. H. Kraemer, will then officially resign, but will in all probability for all practical intents function still for some time until the new Director will have taken over. Dr. H. H. Walz, who combines the secretaryship for Laymen's Work with the Assistant Directorship of the Institute, and who has always edited the Bulletin, will leave in the late autumn of this year. He follows a call of the leading body of the Kirchentag in Germany and will act in the future as its Executive General Secretary. By doing so, he will be active in a field which is ecumenically as important as what he has ably done, up till now, in the context of the World Council of Churches. Mlle S. de Diétrich will, after her retirement in the fall of this year, devote herself to writing in relation to the subject of Bible Study, in which field she has already published various books that are used all over the world. Mme R. Sturm-d'Espine, our hostess, has also decided to leave the Institute after Evanston.

These simple facts indicate that in many respects the Institute will enter, after Evanston, a quite new period of its career. Evanston seems to be a good moment for this great change. This autumn the Institute will have operated for eight years, and has developed during this period in the main under the same leadership. It has now, so to speak, got a distinct physiognomy, and acquired a distinct place in the whole structure of the World Council. It is to be confidently hoped that under its new staff in the post-Evanston period it will continue to grow in significant service to the ecumenical movement, enriched by new touches that will be added to its physiognomy by a new team of staff members.

The Institute, although it is a place where many conferences are held, has always striven not to be a mere conference centre, but a place where "people" really meet on various levels. Let us mention a few. On the level of cooperative and pioneering thinking about the numerous problems and issues, put before and thrust upon us by the urgent need to open up ways for new and relevant contacts between the Church and the world, be it in the field of communicating in word and deed the Christian message to believers and non-believers, or in that of social action and civic, political and cultural responsibility, or in introducing our "people" to the thinking and action of the Ecumenical Movement and the World Council. Or on the level of corporate Bible Study, because we consider a regular, living contact with the Bible one of the most essential instruments for all real renewal of Christian life and of church life. Or on the level of daily common worship and prayer as the basic expression of our oneness in Christ. Or on the level of an open and honest facing of the diversity and divisions of the Christian Church in the light of the will of our Lord for us to be one, or as a Dutch author

has expressed in the title of an excellent booklet : The one Church of God and our many Churches. Especially in this matter we have always striven at Bossey to be frank and realistic, to avoid all easy sentimentalism and emotionalism, which is satisfied with the "feeling" of our being one as Christian individuals belonging to many Churches. We have always acted on the principle that a real facing of the enigmatic divisive state of the Christian Church demands imperatively a new spirit of commitment and action towards the distant goal, of churches which have become one in witness to Christ, in confession of the faith, in worship and in service to the world, and a new prayer for the Holy Spirit.

After two experimental years it has become clear that the Graduate School of Ecumenical Studies, which since 1952 every year from October 1st till February 15th, is a standing item in the programme of the Ecumenical Institute, can develop into an important endeavour in the levels mentioned above. The Graduate School is a joint undertaking of the World Council and the University of Geneva, by which it is recognised as one of its institutes. The Faculty is every year composed of well-known academic teachers from various countries and Churches. Its Dean is the Director of the Ecumenical Institute, who under the guidance and with the necessary agreement of the Board of Governors, prepares the programme. The students are mostly, though not necessarily exclusively, theologians or younger ministers. The object is to provide the Churches with men and women, who by their stay at the Graduate School are able to be in their Churches intelligent agents for opening the eyes and hearts of the membership of their Churches not only for the call to Unity and Mission, but also for the necessity of a radical renewal of the Church in its understanding of its nature and its calling in the world.

What is commonly called "Laymen's Work" has always been and is one of the main interests of the Institute. The original inspiration of the idea to have an Ecumenical Institute as a part of the World Council has its springs there. The Secretariat for Laymen's Work, and the idea to call Dr. Walz into the service of the World Council for this special aspect, came from a Committee that was very closely connected with the Ecumenical Institute.

We prefer to speak of the "lay issue," instead of Laymen's Work. Why? In the view of the Ecumenical Institute, the important point of relation to the lay membership of the Churches is not in the first place to mobilise the ordinary members of the Church for the service of the Church, in order to make them active and open to the Church. To be sure mobilisation or activation of the lay members, divesting the Church of its all too clerical character, are extremely important things. Yet, from the point of view of the Institute this is not the heart of the matter. Therefore we speak of the "lay issue," meaning by that first a negative and second a positive point. The negative point is that, generally speaking, the real significance, place and contribution of the lay membership of the Church as an organic and full part of the whole of it, is not seen in the Churches. If one talks of the *laity* it is normally, at its best, in terms of the activation or mobilisation of the laity for various purposes. The work of educating the Churches to take a deeper and wider view than extension of activity or of labour supply is only at its beginning. It is still in the balance whether the many centres for Laymen's Work, which in several countries started after World War II (e.g. the Evangelical Academies in Germany), and which are impelled by a new vision of the Church, of its relation to the different spheres of secular life, and of its task in the world

through the laity of the Church, really penetrate into the life of the Churches and change their whole outlook and attitude, or whether they will remain extremely interesting side-developments of the Church, praised and appreciated, but not effecting a radical reorientation of the Church, and, in many cases, a radical renewal of its structure and "climate," so that the Church is not a closed and mainly self-regarding body, but an open and forward-looking community.

This being so, we speak of the "lay issue" in order to express that the movement, the vision that lies hidden under the name Laymen's Work is still an issue, the crucial importance of which for a genuine renewal of the Church adequate to the Church's divine calling and relevant to the present day world, has still to be grasped.

The positive point is the real purport of the whole matter, that is to say the recovery, the rediscovery of the meaning of the Church as God's instrument of redemption, as the body in which the powers of God's continuous redemptive action in the world, through Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit, are active, in which it becomes manifest that the redeemed community is a *fact*. It is the recovery of the fundamental point that the Church is that body which is sent into the world and has a ministry to the world, in which ministry the place and participation of the "laity" is as essential, indispensable and obligatory as that of the "clergy."

This is the creative background and motivation of the "lay issue." By viewing it from this angle, the well-known words: "Let the Church be the Church" can gain transforming content. Without it they remain an empty slogan. From this angle alone all lay work in the Church and in the world, every present endeavour to confront lay Christians with the question what meaning and bearing the Christian faith has on the specific sector of life in which they spend the major part of their time and energy, or on the great social, political, cultural, moral issues in which the world to which we all belong threatens to perish, can really become re-creative, because it then has its *roots* in the Church and flows out from her. If not, the alternative for it is an offshoot of the Church, living on the borders both of the Church and the world.

These short reflections may suffice to explain why we prefer, at this moment, to speak of the "lay issue" and why we consider it so essential to the Ecumenical Movement. The "lay issue" is the royal way towards renewal of the Church. An ecumenical movement without a prophetic and persistent call towards renewal and re-formation degenerates into "organising" ecclesiastical re-unions without a renewed apprehension of the Church as an instrument and demonstration of God's redemptive presence and action in this lost and forlorn world.

In the light of this conception of the "lay issue," which is behind the Institute's interest in it, it is of great importance that at Evanston the Secretariat for Laymen's Work will be replaced by the newly-conceived Department on the Work of the Laity. It is to be hoped that the delegates of the Churches at Evanston will be fully conscious of the real significance of their action and give to this new Department full scope for its work, because it signifies that the lay issue is openly recognised as being not a side-affair in the organisational structure of the World Council but a main and central concern. The Ecumenical Institute will certainly have to work in the future in the closest cooperation with the new Department.

SOME ITEMS CONCERNING LAYMEN'S MOVEMENTS

France

Professor Jacques Ellul, one of the leaders of the A.P.P. (see below) has published a study on *L'homme et l'argent* (Man and Money). This study is based on a presentation which Professor Ellul gave to the Synod of the French Reformed Church at its request and incorporates the results of a year's work, done in various groups of the A.P.P. It is interesting to note that at the German Church Rally Hamburg 1953 one working section was occupied with the same problem. The introductions given and reports passed at that section are also available as a booklet under the title "Was machen die Menschen mit dem Geld?" (What do people do with their money?).

* * *

Ever since January 1953 the *Associations Professionnelles Protestantes* have been sponsoring two projects (see bulletin No. 4, p. 40). The first is a *Complementary Fund*. People who enjoy the privilege of living in normal accommodation make donations to this Fund. The money collected is then placed at the disposal of church members who need it for the initial outlay in having a house built. At the request of the pastor of a suburban church, the Fund recently assisted a church member who had been injured during the war and had been turned out by her landlord. She had paid over 100,000 francs into the *Crédit Mutuel du Bâtiment* and lost it all when this Building Society went bankrupt. A loan of 250,000 francs enabled her to obtain the accommodation after all.

Secondly, a *Housing Assistance Movement*. The A.P.P. also asked to cooperate in this movement. Unlike the above Fund, which appeals for donations, this Housing Assistance Movement invites people to take out shares. No interest is paid on them, but each share bears a number, and they are repayable in 25 years by lottery. This Housing Assistance Movement is promoting the building of a group of houses at Choisy-le-Roi which will provide accommodation for 81 families (i.e. 400 persons, including 235 children). Most of these families have been living each in a single furnished room at a rent varying between 5,000 and 10,000 francs a month. The same Movement has opened a new building-yard in the 13th arrondissement of Paris, and is examining a scheme for building houses in the western suburbs.

* * *

The next issue of the *Revue de l'Évangélisation* will consider certain aspects of the modern Roman Catholic approach to evangelism. Certain branches of Catholic Action will be described in one of the contributions. In another article Catholic and Protestant methods of evangelism are compared. A bibliography on priest-workers is also included.

Germany

In 1954, the *Deutsche Evangelische Kirchentag* is to be held for the first time in the German Democratic Republic at Leipzig. An enormous number of people both from the two parts of Germany and from abroad have shown their interest in it. It will not, however, be possible to allow for more than 60,000 full-time participants including the 10,000 Westerners who are allowed by the Communist authorities. It is estimated that the closing meeting will attract 200,000 people from the East Zone in addition. The slogan of the Leipzig Kirchentag will be "Be joyful in hope." This biblical passage has been chosen because of its immediate relevance to the situation in which Christians live under Communist rule, and because of its close connection with the main theme of the Evanston Assembly of the World Council of Churches, "Christ, the hope of

the world." This hope, said Dr. von Thadden, the president of the Kirchentag, does not permit us to sit around doing nothing in a sort of "eschatological waiting room." It forces us to take definite action in this world. The working groups preparing for the Kirchentag are busy collecting experience and material in order to pave the way for Christian action in society at Leipzig.

* * *

Following the *Aktuelle Gespräche* of Bad Boll, the *Berichte von Loccum* and other publications of this kind, the Evangelical Academy of Hofgeismar now issues a bimonthly periodical, called *Anstöße* ("challenges"). Well written summary reports of certain selected conferences are given with a view to introducing the reader to the subject matter itself. Thus social problems are dealt with under the title "Beyond Capitalism and Socialism"; the "Renewal of Church Music" in our day is described and analysed. Leaders of several Evangelical Academies had a meeting with Professor Heidegger, the well known philosopher. The report of this small round table conference is an excellent introduction to the problem of the relation between philosophy and theology. Alongside of these reports, lectures are reproduced which were given at the Academy. President Martin Niemöller talked on Society and Church. No attempts must be made, Dr. Niemöller said, either to make society into the Church by enforcing so-called Christian principles upon it or to identify the Church with society or any given social system. There is no such thing as a Christian structure of society, but the Church has a critical and normative function in relation to social structure in as far as it has always to point to the dignity of man, to his right to live a human life among other human beings in freedom of choice and in obligation towards his fellow-men.

* * *

Berlin is one of the few places where the two orbits in which our world is divided still meet. The two orbits carry with them two languages, two ways of thinking, two entirely different conceptions of man. One of the burning issues in such a situation was taken up by the Evangelical Academy in Berlin when they called a conference on the conception of man and the concept of the university.

* * *

Owing to its geographical situation and to the initiative of Bishop Hanns Lilje and its two directors the Evangelical Academy at *Loccum* (Hannover) has become a place where frequently important people, otherwise too busy to attend conferences, meet for at least a few hours or even a weekend. Many members of the present government at Bonn and leaders of the parliamentary opposition have enjoyed the hospitality of the Academy. Likewise leading men in the West German industrial areas, both industrialists and trade unionists, are well known guests at Loccum. The Church as represented by the Academy provides the ground where those men and women can talk to each other and to relatively small groups of competent people, off the record and in a restful atmosphere.

Great Britain

The subject of the West of England Conference of the *Baptist Men's Movement* held in November 1953 was "The Christian in the World." The addresses on The Christian as Citizen, The Christian in Industry, and The Christian in Public Life, not only sketched the responsibilities of the individual Christian but also outlined the implications for the organised Church.

* * *

The monthly publication, *The Layman*, is an expression of a contemporary movement to link Christianity with Citizenship. The Editor is Mr. Patrick Hamilton and the contributors come from various denominations. The articles and also the letters to the Editor reflect the interests and concerns of some of those who try to take God into their daily work and life, and who have come to give witness of their faith. Among the articles recently published are "My Faith and my Job" by six people from various occupations, "Render unto Caesar", etc. A rather interesting new feature of *The Layman* is to offer, on request, copies of scripts of religious broadcasts, thus meeting a long-felt public demand. *The Layman* fulfills a useful function in informing the average church member of the life and thought of other laymen.

Italy

The annual conference of the *Lay Preachers' Union* of the Methodist Church in Italy (see Bulletin No. 3, p. 41) took place on May 1st at Portici, near Naples. Dr. Renato Tulli, the Secretary of the Union, gave an address summarising laymen's activities in other countries. This led to a discussion dealing in particular with the problems confronting Protestant laymen in Italy. It was decided, among other things, to hold regional conferences during the year in order to study the local problems more closely.

Orthodox

Under the patronage of the Roumanian Orthodox Episcopate of America a *lay brotherhood* was founded some months ago. The aim of this brotherhood is to create and promote fellowship amongst Orthodox laymen most of whom live now in dispersion, to strengthen the spiritual bond with their lost home and its Christian tradition, and to facilitate contacts with Christians in other churches and particularly with lay organisations. The brotherhood publishes a bulletin called *Fratia Ortodoxa* in the Roumanian language; its editor is Dr. C. Amzar, 3, Carl-von-Lindestrasse, Wiesbaden, Germany.

Switzerland

The Mission House of Basle announces a further *training course for lay workers* (see Bulletins Nos. 4, p. 47, and 5, p. 45) to be held from September 11 to October 9, 1954. These training courses are meant for laymen who either at home or abroad want to become missionaries of the Gospel while remaining in their secular jobs.

* * *

The *approach to Christianity in professional life* and the Christian approach to daily work are at the bottom of many of the modern lay movements. Methods to be used are subject to study in a number of countries. Recently Miss Hedi Hardmeier, a student of the Zurich School for Social Work, prepared a study on "Berufsgruppenarbeit der Reformierten Heimstätte Boldern." This student took part in a number of conferences at Boldern and then based her research on a questionnaire which was to be answered by former participants at these conferences, such as doctors, school teachers, industrialists, workers, etc. The statistical material is still too small to enable general conclusions to be drawn from it, but it is to be hoped that similar studies will be undertaken elsewhere and on an even larger scale.

United States

Dr. Truman Douglass who is a member of the *Laymen's Fellowship* of the Congregational Christian Churches has written a most interesting and inspiring article "The Marks of a Living Church" which appeared in the January 11, 1954, issue of *Advance*.

In it he points to the two marks of a living Church the first of which is "that the Church thinks of itself as a mission. It does not only have a mission. It is a mission." The second mark is "the quality of wholeness . . . requiring a community that is . . . a whole and complete Church of Christ." Concerning the place of the laity in the Church, Dr. Douglass believes that the lay members should be "the Church, not an embarrassment . . . , not a 'laity' privileged to support an organisation that really belongs to the clergy and to be assigned various forms of ecclesiastical busy work."

* * *

"An invitation has been issued to laymen who will be in St. Louis for the Southern Baptist Convention in June to attend the annual sessions of the Pastors' Conference. The Honourable Allan Shivers, Governor of Texas, will speak on the subject, The Layman Undergirding the Church, at the first session." (Brotherhood News)

* * *

Dr. Urner Goodman, General Director of *United Churchmen*, a department of the National Council of Churches in the United States, announced that the department would hold its first national convention in Cincinnati, probably February 25-27, 1955. It is estimated that attendance at the meeting may reach 15,000. Invitations are extended to all denominational Men's Groups, even those which are not members of the National Council. (Religious News Service)

* * *

According to its own definition, the *International Council for Christian Leadership* is an informal association of convinced laymen banded together to find through Christ a better way of living, and to demonstrate and promote in home community, nation and world a more effective Christian leadership. In February, the American branch of the association held a large meeting in New York on the subject "Living Christianity versus Militant Materialism." For May 27-31 a world conference is announced at Noordwijk on Sea (Netherlands) under the auspices of the International Council for Christian Leadership. The meeting will be opened by the chairman of the conference, H. R. H. Princess Wilhelmina of the Netherlands. The main subject, "United Christian Action," will be introduced by Dr. A. W. Kist (Netherlands), Mr. Wallace Haines and Mr. Abraham Vereide (U.S.A.).

* * *

On February 14th a *group of doctors* was called together by Dr. Charles K. Johnson, pastor of the First Presbyterian Church of Kalamazoo, Michigan. Addressing the group as members both of the medical profession and of their church, Dr. Johnson drew some tentative conclusions from the relation between these two memberships. He asked whether the confidence often placed in doctors did not put them under an obligation to consider the spiritual as well as the physiological and emotional condition of their patients, and where appropriate to suggest an interview with a minister. He ended by advocating regular meetings of a similar kind to discuss the assistance which their faith could provide in their concern with individuals.

* * *

Religious leaders are making efforts to intensify the work of Christian laymen in bringing spiritual principles into operation in everyday life. At Richmond, Ind., sixteen prominent laymen from various parts of the country decided to incorporate a new national lay organisation to be known tentatively as the *Yokefellow Foundation*. The lay leaders met with Dr. D. Elton Trueblood, head of the philosophy department of Earlham College, a Quaker institution. Dr. Trueblood is the founder of the new movement, which is described as "a reformation of lay religion." Although the national organisation is only now being set up, the movement has been in existence for well over a year. It grew out of a national conference on lay religion sponsored by Earlham College in May, 1952. At the conference, business and professional men from the

United States and Canada agreed that the purpose of the lay ministry was to stress the practice of Christian principles in everyday life. Following the conference, most of those who had attended went to work preparing for the establishment of the new national organisation. The movement already includes groups in a number of churches and colleges. "Lay religion, to be effective, must have the kind of drive found in medieval orders," Dr. Trueblood said. The movement has received support from lay leaders of several denominations. Use of the Yoke as a symbol started simultaneously but independently at Earlham College and at McCormick Theological Seminary, a Presbyterian college in Chicago. The decision to incorporate as a foundation was made to enable the movement to receive contributions to support its work. The group's backers met at a conference at Earlham College in April in order to complete organisational work. Dr. Trueblood was named by the organisers to direct the Foundation's programme.

(*Religious News Service*)

Miscellaneous

The lack of love and understanding generally shown by the community for the mentally ill has led Christians in many places to reconsider this problem. Thus the service of lay visitors (see p. 34) in Eastern Germany is giving special attention to this aspect of pastoral care. In Thüringen, laymen have undertaken in pairs to live with and take care of individual mental patients. In Finland also this problem is being discussed and a research centre for mental diseases is planned in connection with the work of the Parishional Institute of the Finnish Church.

The April issue of *Mænd og Mission*, the organ of the Danish laymen's movement, publishes an article on "The Laity and Pastoral Care." It deals with the task of lay men and women who share this responsibility with the pastor not just because he thinks it is something they are capable of doing, but because Christian pastoral care is a function of the entire community in which both the specialised knowledge of the pastor and the living and active participation of the laity are needed. Every layman and lay woman is called to this task — not "organised" for it, but simply wherever he or she lives and works.

With a gradually aging population the Church is facing in all parts of the world a new problem. Various institutes and groups study the tasks which arise from this fact for the community. Thus a conference on "The Church and the Older Adult" was held on April 27 in Chicago ; it was the third of its kind and consisted of ministers, social workers, recreation leaders, religious teachers and lay persons.

CALENDAR *

ECUMENICAL

World Council of Churches. Evanston, Ill. (USA). *August 15-31* Second Assembly. Main Theme : Christ — The Hope of the World. Secondary Themes : Faith and Order : Our Oneness in Christ and our Disunity as Churches. Evangelism : The Mission of the Church to Those outside her Life. Social Questions : The Responsible Society in a World Perspective. International Affairs : Christians in the Struggle for a World Community. Inter-group Relations : The Church amid Racial and Ethnic Tensions. The Laity : The Christian in his Vocation.

Ecumenical Work Camps for Adults. Driebergen (Holland) *17 July - 7 August*. Building a family vacation centre for workers' families. Mulhouse (France) *18 July - 7 August*. Helping a community of workers who are building their own houses. Deutschfeistritz (Austria) *9 August - 5 September*. Planning a garden and playground for a new recreation centre.

* Details of programmes given in Bulletin No. 6 are not repeated here.

For information on youth work camps in Europe, Far East, Near East, America and Africa apply for detailed programme through Ecumenical Work Camps, 17, route de Malagnou, Geneva (Switzerland).

BRITAIN

Baptist Lay Preacher's Federation. Oxford. *June 25-28* Annual Conference.

GERMANY

Deutsche Evangelische Kirchentag (German Evangelical Church Rally) Leipzig. *July 7-11* General Theme: Be joyful in hope. Groups on Church, Family, People, Work, Village and City.

Evangelical Academies

Berlin *May 22-23* Meditation on "Joy." *June 12-13* "Faith and Science" for the younger generation; 19-20 Doctors. *July 1-4* "Specialisation and Character Formation" for university lecturers and students. 31.7-1.8 Meditation on "God in History." *August 21-22* "Nationalism" for the younger generation. *September 3-6* "Work and Leisure" for those responsible for the training of apprentices. **Hofgeismar** *June 10-13* Office Secretaries; 17-20 The Art of Education; 25-27 The Image. 29.7-10.8 "Fundamentals of Dogmatics" Vacation course for laymen. *August 12-15* "Our Concepts of God" for teachers of religion; 16-23 Study and Song Week for Choir Music, Gregorian Chant and Bible Study; 26-28 Man in the Mines. *September 13-19* The Parables of the Kingdom; 23-26 The Evangelical Academy and the Community. 29.9-2.10 Old Age "And in the evening there will be light." *October 6-9* "Called to Freedom" for VltH formeres; 13-17 "Europe — a way out?"; 28-31 "Life in the Film" for the younger generation. *November 19-21* Pain; 26-28 The Spell of Sport. 30.11-5.12 Meditation on "Incarnation." *December 10-12* "For the People..." for jurists; 16-18 Man in the Mines. 30.12-2.1 "We are heirs" for the younger generation.

Tutzing *May 28-30* The Confessions and the One Church. *June 5-13* Meetings of the Academy organised at Järvenpää, Finland. *July 2-4* and 20-22 for boys and girls on leaving grammar school; 9-11 The Road — Function, attraction and destination. 23.7-1.8 "Access to Politics" for young people and practising politicians. *August* (dates to be fixed) "Drama Today" Stocktaking. (dates to be fixed) Conference for women teachers in agricultural schools. 13-15 Bayreuth Study Conference on Parapsychology. *September 17-19* Würzburg. "Myth, History and Science" Seminar. 24-26 Stein near Nürnberg. Seminar for workers in industry. 24-26 Tutzing. "Disaster and God's Love" seminar on selected works by Simone Weil.

NETHERLANDS

Free Reformed University Amsterdam. *September 1-11* Vacation Course for Foreign Students "The Gospel and our Responsibility in the World."

SWITZERLAND

Mission House Basel. 11 *September - 9 October.* Third training course for lay workers. 1st week: Man and the World Today; 2nd week: The Bible; 3rd week: The Christian and the World of Our Day; 4th week: Evangelism and Witness.

LAY, THEOLOGY OF THE LAITY, LAYMEN'S WORK

(a lexicographical study)¹

"Lay (man)" appears in the European vernaculars during the 12th and 13th centuries as a term borrowed from the Latin *laicus*. This is derived from the Greek λαϊκός which is an adjectival form, also used as a noun, of the root λαός (Attic λέως). It means, speaking very generally, "pertaining to the λαος." The etymological origin of λαός is not clear. At all events, it designates the people not in the sense of a political body (δῆμος, *populus*), nor in the sense of a tribal or national unit (ἔθνος, *gens*) but for the most part in the sense of: multitude, people, mass. The amorphous multiplicity of human beings first and foremost implied in this concept is determined by that to which it is opposed and related. Thus *laos* in relation to a country means the population, in relation to a prince his subjects, in relation to a military leader the army, in relation to a priest the worshippers. This capacity of the word for remaining open to definition from outside and above has made possible its remarkable use in the Septuagint, the pre-Christian Greek translation of the Old Testament. There it is used in relation to God and usually means the people of God *par excellence*, i. e. Israel, the people of Jahweh chosen out of "the peoples," membership of which is a privilege and carries with it a special obligation. It is in this sense that the word is used in the New Testament where, however, it takes on the meaning of the "new people of God" composed of Jews and Gentiles. *Laikos* does not occur in the New Testament; if it did occur, however, it would logically have to mean "pertaining to the community chosen in Christ." It may be assumed that this idea is present as an undertone in the words λαός and *laicus* wherever they occur in early Christian writings. There is, however, no adequate foundation for the claim made by Dom Gregory Dix (*Apostolic Ministry*, London 1946, p. 283) that this was the sole or even dominant meaning during the first three centuries of Christian history.

Already in the Old and New Testaments λαός is often used in the general sense of crowd, people (in particular in the Lukan writings) and not

¹ Revised and expanded version of an article "Laity" contributed to the *Evangelische Soziallexikon*, edited by Frdr. Karrenberg on behalf of the *Deutsche Evangelische Kirchentag*.

infrequently in contrast to superiors, such as the Sanhedrin, Pilate, etc. In this connection a passage such as Jer. 34, 19, where the priests too are contrasted with the *laos*, is of particular significance. It is in accordance with such Old Testament passages that Clement of Rome (about 100 A.D.) already uses the term "laity" as opposed to priests.

In later Christian literature the use of the term for the worshipping community as distinct from the priests has more and more come to hold the field. As early as Justin Martyr (about 150 A.D.) occurs the statement which, for the succeeding centuries and down to our time, has remained a norm for the position of the "laity" in the Church: the *laos*, at the end of each prayer, confirms the words spoken (by the leaders of the congregation) through its Amen. In fact, the word *laicus* (layman) is from the beginning used almost exclusively in contrast to the *clericus*, the officiant, or the priest, or, with a different nuance, to the *homo religiosus*, the monk. (Cf. for the above and in general, the presentation by P. Yves M.-J. Congar *Jalons pour une théologie du laïc*, Paris 1953, which is illuminating both historically and systematically.) Gradually the line of demarcation was so sharply drawn that Gratian (d. 1160) was able to say: *duo sunt genera Christianorum*, referring to the clergy and the laity (see Congar *op. cit.* p. 27). Stephen, Bishop of Tournai (d. 1203), speaks in the same sense of *duo populi*, to which *duae vitae*, *duo principatus* and a *duplex iurisdictionis ordo* correspond (Mirbt, *Quellen zur Geschichte des Papsttums und des Römischen Katholizismus*, 5th ed., 1934, No. 318). In the 14th and 15th centuries the laity and the clergy are even referred to as two separate bodies. The clergy are regarded not only as different from the laity but as constituting the superior element in the Church. Thus e. g. there existed, before the Council of Trent which established the *character indelebilis* in its final form, a punitive *reductio in communionem laicam* for priests (evidence for this is found as early as Cyprian, d. 258). Furthermore, this separation early appears in worship, where the priests sat or stood in the apse, the laity remaining in the nave, or body of the church. In accordance with the original meaning of κληρός (lot, inheritance), the clergy are referred to either as those who are the special portion of God and who possess in particular God as their inheritance (Ps. 16, 5) or as those who have been singled out from the *laos* by lot (understood as the voice of God) and called to a higher vocation. This meaning of the word *clerus* and the evaluation of the status of the laity which is inseparable from it, finds its echo up to the present time in the formula of ordination even in many

so-called Free Churches, where the ordinand is separated from the rest of the congregation as one "set apart."

The Reformation brought a change, inasmuch as it proclaimed anew the biblical and early church doctrine of the priesthood of all believers, and drew the conclusion that every member of the Church as such possessed all spiritual authority and that therefore there was no valid ground for the existence of a specially consecrated clergy. In his treatise "To the Christian Nobility of the German Nation" (1520; for Luther's aim in writing this treatise see his letter to Amsdorf of 23.6.1520: "Whether God wills to help His Church through the laity") Luther emphasises, with regard to the late medieval theories, that "Christ does not have two bodies or two different kinds of body, one temporal and one spiritual" (WA VI 408). However, the conduct of the public worship of the community should, in the interest of needful order, be carried out by persons who, on account of their peculiar gifts, have been called by a special procedure to this function. "Whoever has undergone baptism may boast that he is already consecrated priest, bishop, and pope, although it is not meet for everyone to exercise such ministries. For, although we all alike are priests, nobody may put himself forward and attempt, without our permission and decision, to do what we all have equal power to do. For that which is common to all, nobody may take for himself without the will and the injunction of the community." (Luther, *op. cit.*) Nevertheless the Protestant Churches too have become to a large extent clericalised. The pastor, although not necessarily separated from the "laity" by a special consecration, is set apart all the more on account of his theological knowledge and his particular position in the social structure. If, in the Orthodox and Roman Catholic Churches, the layman is the unordained person, he is, in the Protestant Churches of Europe, largely identified as the person who has not been theologically trained. It is from this fact that there has developed the secularised conception of the layman, in the sense of the man who lacks technical competence in a given field, whilst the Catholic opposition between clergy and laity has led to the term "laïcisme." The term "laïc" in France is identified with "religiously neutral" or "without religion."

Just as the Middle Ages saw the rise of certain movements directed against the religious monopoly of the priest, since the Reformation several movements have been directed against the rule or the exclusive ministry of the theologically trained expert, e. g. the pietistic and the missionary movements, also in certain cases liberalism, and movements in favour of "democracy in the

Church.” Here and there these have led to the formation of independent church communities (Methodists, Congregationalists, Quakers, etc.). Not always but in many cases the differences between “clerics” and “lay members,” from the point of view both of doctrinal definition and of social status, are completely levelled out in these “free churches.” In their place, however, there develops a new distinction, that between church officers and ordinary members of the Church. Laymen are now those church members who are not officially engaged in the church organisation. In this sense a parish worker, an organist, a youth leader or an official legal adviser would not be classified as a layman. This distinction, which is no longer theological or social but very clearly sociological, applies even where the word “lay” itself has been erased from the vocabulary of a church community because of its traditional doctrinal connotations.

From all this it becomes clear that the “lay issue” is implicitly a question as to the nature and structure of the Church itself. At all events, a solution cannot be found by declaring either that there are in principle no laymen in the Church, or that all members of the Church are laymen because they belong to the people of God. This affirmation is no better than doctrinaire when, for the sake of a theory which on certain premisses is theologically correct, the real state of the case is overlooked. This is that 99% of church members in their relationship to the organised Church are in a different position from that of the few who not only live out their Christian vocation in the service of the organised Church but very often earn their living through it. The fact that by far the greatest number of church members have to spend their lives “in the world” cannot be without relevance to the understanding of the Church, its nature and its relation to this world.

From this arises the modern demand for a theology of the laity. The position of the laity, which so far has nearly always been defined negatively, is to be seen positively as an essential aspect of the nature of the Church itself. The Church lives in the world, and the layman embodies to an impressive degree the solidarity of the Church and the Church’s ministry with man and with the orders of this world. In so far as laymen, as members of the Church, are dispersed everywhere in the world, in all nations, in all realms of life, in all professions, they are witnesses to the presence of Christ in the world. The “gathered community,” which is so often considered an essential characteristic of the Church, is basically an eschatological anticipation. The manner in which Christ is present which is typical for the

age between the resurrection and the parousia^{is} His presence in the diaspora, the dispersion of the Church. "Ye are the salt of the earth" (Matth. 5, 13) — without dispersion no savour. It must be remembered that it is the earth of which Christ speaks here. Gustave Thils has begun to work out a theology of the laity under the title *Théologie des réalités terrestres*. The presence of Christ witnessed to by the laity as the dispersed Church means the Lordship of Christ over all realms of life, and at the same time the hiddenness of this Lordship. Thus the laity ultimately represent the Church inasmuch as they are concerned with transient things which point to eternal things.

A theology of the laity is therefore not a theology for the use of the "non-experts" in the Church, but a theology which works out these aspects of the divine act of redemption. There is first the question of the relation of the Word of God to those earthly things and to those spheres of activity in which laymen in particular live their lives. Secondly, there is the question of the way in which Christians ought to behave in these spheres, e. g. politics, economics, culture, etc. Thirdly, there is the question of the proclamation and spreading of the Gospel through those who, together with the majority of mankind, share man's destiny of work under the conditions of the modern working world. Finally, there is the question of equipping the laity for their ministry in the world and at the same time working out the right form of the Church's life and of the various ministries and services in the Christian community.

These concerns are taken up by those forces within the Church which are today usually covered by the term "laymen's work." Laymen's work is not the activity of a specific organisation, but one aspect of the renewal of the Church. What has to be aimed at is a right understanding on the part of the Church of its responsibility in the world, and at the same time a right understanding of its own inner being. Answers have to be found to urgent questions regarding the constitution and form of the individual parish congregation, regarding missionary effort and evangelistic work, and regarding the kind of training appropriate to ordained ministers and lay folk in the modern world. A new understanding must be reached of the cure of souls as that spiritual companionship which goes with a man in the ways of his life in the world, and of religious instruction as the equipment of older and younger Christians for Christian living in this world.

Only if it has become clear that the concern of the laymen's movement extends to the message and the life of the Church as a whole, is it useful to

point to the organised experiments which are being carried out with a view to making progress in this direction. There is first of all the indispensable study undertaken in church committees, independent study groups, and university institutes (such as the Sociological Institute of the Dutch Reformed Church in Utrecht) by way of investigating certain sectors of contemporary life and attempting to see them in the light of the Gospel. Secondly, there are meeting places such as Evangelical Academies and similar institutions and groups, in Germany and the Netherlands, in America and India. Groups such as the *Associations Professionnelles Protestantes* in France or the Christian Frontier Council in London belong to this category. All these forms of "meeting" have two concerns: creation of fellowship among the dispersed (Melancthon describes the Church itself as the *coëtus dispersorum*), and a vital spiritual encounter with the world to grapple with the problems of the world. Thirdly, there are training centres and courses organised in the form of evening classes, week-end courses or full-time training for laymen in general, or for special professions such as workers, farmers, students, etc. Fourthly, there are work communities (at times also called "cells") in which Christians and non-Christians meet on the basis of their common work, e. g. the university, a factory, a professional association. These four types resemble one another in that they are not organisations in the technical sense and that they are not based on the principle of membership — even though in some cases there does exist a core of leaders living as a lay order. In this they differ from the laymen's work which, on a denominational or interdenominational level, is carried out by organised associations. A further common feature of these four categories is the fact that, although they come within the framework of the Church and are in many cases closely related to a particular church authority, the focus of their work is outside the life of the traditional parish (cf. Eberhard Müller, *Die Welt ist anders geworden*, Hamburg 1953). This distinguishes them from the great church societies of laymen and lay women, since these, even when organised on a nation-wide basis, rarely escape from the limitations of a single denomination. Consequently the new approach which is embodied in these new forms of work has an ecumenical relevance, since here is to be found a confrontation of Church and world in a fundamental and practical sense, and not merely a confrontation of the Lutheran, Anglican or Methodist Church with the world.

Distinctive examples of such modern lay movements, which are to be found in many countries and nearly all churches, are for instance Catholic

Action with its manifold ramifications, the Ecumenical Institute at Bossey, the lay conferences held in Europe and America under the auspices of the World Council of Churches, the lay movements in the Orthodox world, in particular the Zoë Movement in Greece, and — most widely known of all — the *Deutsche Evangelische Kirchentag*, an enterprise which has grown so to speak out of nothing ! All these activities are important, and helpful to many. But the actual *raison d'être* of laymen's work, the renewal of the Church through its mission to the world, transcends them all.

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